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ABSTRACT

This workbook is a collection of practical strategies and techniques for team-building that can be used by educational consultants or by the team members themselves without outside assistance. Various aids are presented to facilitate organizational improvement in schools. The consultant aids are listed as diagnostic warm-ups, exercises, and procedures, and as team-building warm-ups, exercises, and procedures. The self-administered aids are for getting better acquainted, warming up, diagnosing the team, and team-building. Space is provided in the workbook for writing answers. (Author/LD)

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# Aids for the Development of Educational Teams

by

Jane Arends

Ann Burr

Richard Schmuck

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Center for Educational Policy and Management

University of Oregon

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Contents


Introduction 1

Consultant Aids 2

Diagnostic Warm-Ups
(1) Hopes and Concerns 3
(2) Where Are We? 4
(3) Whom do we Follow? 5
(4) Explosion 6
(5) Rank Order 7
(6) Leftovers 8
(7) Wastebasket Toss 9

Diagnostic Exercises
(1) Find a Resource Person 10
(2) Class Picture 11
(3) Rewards Game 12

Diagnostic Procedures
(1) Wanted: Safe Space 15
(2) Examining Norms 16

Team-Building Warm-Ups
(1) Portrait of Myself 19
(2) Purse or Pocket 20
(3) Hold it! 21
(4) Values Continuum 22
(5) Who Am I? 23
(6) Mother Goose 24
(7) Queen for a Day 25
(8) Found Object 26

Team-Building Exercises
(1) Slow Down 27
(2) Stress Styles 28
(3) The Drug Store Contest 30
(4) A Consensus Task on the Values of Black and White Teachers 32

Team-Building Procedures
(1) Resource #127 is me! 37
(2) Uncovering Role Conflict 39
(3) Helping Clarify Problems 41
(4) A Problem-Solving Method 42
(5) A Procedure for Monitoring Problem Solving 45

Self-Administered Aids 50

Getting Better Acquainted
(1) Concentric Circles 51
(2) Find a Partner 52
(3) Find Somebody Who 53
(4) Toss It! 54
(5) Who Am I? 55
(6) Newspaper Autobiography 56
(7) Interviewing 57
(8) Swizzlestick 58

Warming Up Just for Fun
(1) Wind in the Trees 59
(2) Assassin 60
(3) Murder 61
(4) Human Machine 62
(5) Sing-A-Long 63
(6) Billy Goat 64
(7) Mirroring 65
(8) This is Your Elbow 66
(9) Cheer Leader 67

Diagnosing Your Own Team
(1) What Kind of An Educational Team Are We? 68
(2) Athletic Teams 73
(3) The Action Strategies Questionnaire 74
(4) The Quality of Life Questionnaire 77
(5) How Are We Doing? 78
(6) The Short Survey 80
(7) When Are We Effective? 81
(8) How Smooth Are Our Team Processes? 84

Self-Administered Team-Building Activities
(1) Biographies 88
(2) Agenda Building 89
(3) A Procedure for Goal Setting 90
(4) Negotiating Expectations 91
(5) "So What Are the Problems?" 93
(6) Planning Methods 99
(7) Charting Responsibilities for Decision Making 103

## Introduction

The program on strategies of organizational change at the Center for Educational Policy and Management of the University of Oregon has been carrying out a series of research and development projects since 1967 to investigate the usefulness of consultation in organization development (OD) for schools. Numerous aids have been produced to support the work of educational consultants who facilitate organizational improvement in schools. These aids take the form of social psychological concepts, intervention designs, diagnostic and feedback instruments, guidelines for tailoring OD interventions, learning games, skill exercises, group procedures, and an audio-tape slide presentation. Most of these aids are described in the Handbook of Organization Development in Schools (Schmuck, Runkel, Saturen, Martell, and Derr, 1972). A second edition of the Handbook presently is being prepared by Schmuck, Runkel, Arends, and Arends for publication in 1977. This current compendium of aids for team-building is supplementary to the first and second Handbooks.

In all, we have carried out six interrelated, longitudinal research and development projects on OD in schools. One of those projects focused deliberately on how the OD strategy and techniques can be used to facilitate the development of educational teams. We compared the usefulness of two different OD strategies for enabling six elementary schools to convert from traditional, non-collaborative teaching structures to a multiunit, team teaching arrangement. A monograph was produced on this project entitled, Consultation for Innovative Schools (Schmuck, Murray, Smith, Schwartz, and M. Runkel, 1975) in which comparative data were presented on some dynamics that arise when planned team-building is proceeding.

Along with teaching teams and administrative cabinets, we also have had consultative experiences with across-school teacher teams, parent and community teams, and student teams (Schmuck, 1974; and Schmuck and Schmuck, 1974). Earlier this year we completed a practical booklet on team-building for educators entitled, The Development of Educational Teams (Schwartz, Steefel, and Schmuck, 1976). Along with definitions and concepts related to educational teams of every type we presented guidelines and categories for observing team processes, indicators of team effectiveness, techniques and aids for convening teams, and recommendations on how to use outside consultants for team building. Since preparing that booklet we have continued to collect techniques that can be self-administered by educational teams, requiring no outside consultant. This compendium is presented in a continuing effort to offer educators practical strategies and techniques for team-building.

## Consultant Aids

In this first major section of this document, we present brief descriptions of aids for team-building that we believe are most effectively used when administered by consultants who are not members of the team. Each activity requires a degree of objectivity, disinterestedness, firmness, and sensitivity which makes it very difficult for a team-member to initiate the technique and to manage it. The consultant who intends to try these techniques should be well versed in the contents of both the Handbook of Organization Development in Schools (1972) and The Development of Educational Teams (1976).

We categorize the consultant's aids below in six ways. In the section we present seven diagnostic warm-ups. We show how planned uses of physical activity can be employed by the consultant to help an educational team bring into the open some of their problems or concerns. These activities also are used to help team members get ready for active problem solving and decision making. The second group of acitivities is primarily diagnostic. A consultant can use these to help a team to diagnose itself while still playing a serious game. The third category, Diagnostic Procedures, deals directly with the actual day-to-day life of the team and can be integrated into it. In the fourth section we present eight brief descriptions of team-building warm-ups, activities that can be used by the consultant to build up member energy and concentration for work. The fifth section on Team-Building Exercises offers game-like activities to help imporove team functioning. Finally, the last section presents five procedures for team-building that can be easily worked into the team's normal day-to-day activities.

Diagnostic Warm-Up: Hopes and Concerns

Ask the total group to form into small work groups for brainstorming. Explain that "brainstorming" is most effective when no one is judgmental about a contribution and when the recorder does not spend a great deal of time making sure the wording is perfect. It is only important that the small group understands the intent of the contribution.

Direct each group to list on a chalkboard or large paper what they hope will happen for their team and what they are concerned (or worried) about. Explain that the lists will be shared and clarified later with the total group.

This activity often results in individuals finding that their concerns and hopes are shared by others. A consultant can use the lists to decide what other exercises might be helpful.

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Diagnostic Warm-Up: Where Are We?

Ask the entire team to line up against a wall. Then ask a diagnostic question such as, "How far has your team progressed in being open with one another?" or "How much progress have you made on the task that I just gave to you so far?" Individual team members are told to place themselves near or far from the wall to represent progress. Staying up against the wall represents no progress; standing at the opposite end of the room represents great progress. Individuals state why they have chosen to stand where they are.

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Diagnostic Warm-Up: Whom Do We Follow?

Instruct the group to form a circle, arms around one anothers' waists. Using no verbal cues, each person is to try to lead or pull the group in some direction. Allow this activity to continue for some time or until many interactions have occurred. The group can sit down, then, and talk about their perceptions of what happened. Observers comments are very helpful in this activity because the participants are so involved in an effort to affect the group that they are not always aware of their own actions.

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Diagnostic Warm-Up: Explosion

Instruct the team to line up against one wall with a chair (or any inanimate object) across the space from each person. Ask the participants to imagine that the chair is any person or group of people toward which they feel some tension or frustration. At your signal all should rush across to the chair and "explode" in some way. They can yell, shake it, kick it, etc., until they feel satisfied, then return to debrief. Each person may share whatever s/he wants concerning the identity of the "chair", the reason for the tension, and the results of the "explosion." The consultant may want to ask, "Does your team provide a way to discuss tensions and/or to alleviate them?"

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Diagnostic Warm-Ups: Rank Order

Ask someone to construct a physical line of all the group members in order of authority (or "importance" if this is appropriate), including him/herself in the line, and then explain the reasons behind the ranking. Ask if anyone else has a different idea. Have him or her change the order and explain. Continue until no one else volunteers. Now ask the group to line themselves in order of authority. The group can discuss the feelings experienced, the misunderstandings which may exist, the relationships that seemed to emerge. The consultant will have discovered how clear or fuzzy the line of authority is.

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Diagnostic Warm-Up: Leftovers

Announce that we are going to create three equal-sized subgroups out of the team. Select one individual at random and have that person choose another individual who in turn chooses another and so on until the first subgroup is formed. Now there are 2/3 of the entire team leftover for making up the next two subgroups. To get the second subgroup the first subgroup meets briefly to select 1/2 of the remaining leftovers. Then the remaining 1/3 of team members, the true leftovers, make up the third subgroup by default. Each subgroup meets to discuss how it felt to form subgroups in this manner. Finally, the entire team debriefs the experience, sharing feelings and checking impressions with one another.

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Diagnostic Warm-Up: Wastebasket Toss

All members of the team are asked to wad up a piece of scrap paper and put their name on it somewhere (this is to provide some "ownership" of the wad). A wastebasket is placed in the center of the room and participants are asked to stand as close to or as far away from the wastebasket as they wish. At a signal, all toss their paper wads, trying to get them in the basket. The consultant asks, "Is the distance you are standing from the wastepaper basket representative of how much risk you are willing to take, today?" Encourage discussion of how each person feels at the moment about risk-taking, relating the discussion to ways in which team members usually work together on tasks.

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## Diagnostic Exercise: Find A Resource Person

This role-playing exercise helps members of a group discover and talk about the behaviors that make a person a resource in a group. It also gives them a chance to practice describing observable behaviors without making inferences about the other's motives, attitudes, or personality traits, without name-calling, and without putting people in categories such as "nice guy." It can be used to build a checklist of helpful behaviors that the group would like to see exhibited as it works on other tasks.

The exercise requires a minimum of two group that have four or five members each. More groups or slightly larger groups can also work. If there are more than 15 or so people, it is best to separate them into bunches of 3 groups so that no one has to watch more than a couple of skits in which he or she is not a player.

Groups meet separately for 10-15 minutes to plan and practice a role-play skit they will present to other groups. The situation and roles portrayed by a group don't matter except that one or more role-takers should plan to do something that others in the group think would be helpful. For example, a group might portray the aftermath of a playground accident in which several of the students help by offering information about what happened. As another example, a group might portray a school board trying to make a tough decision where one of the members helps telling a joke to ease the tension.

Each group then presents its role-play in turn. After each skit, members of the other groups try to guess who was acting as a resource person by describing a helpful behavior they noticed. The presenting group can only confirm or deny that the behavior was one they had planned to include. They cannot argue whether or not a behavior they exhibited was viewed as helpful by someone else.

The consultant might make a list of helpful behaviors that are mentioned and afterwards help the group review major points that came up in the discussion.

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This exercise is modeled after one called "Find the Consultant," developed by Ruth Emory and Rene Pino of the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory in Portland, Oregon.

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## Diagnostic Exercise: Class Picture

Organizational structures are often depicted on paper charts with boxes and lines for people and relationships. Such charts may capture a small part of the reality, but it is always a very small part. The purpose of this procedure is to help a team uncover a greater part of their reality as a human system.

The consultant asks participants to recall posing for a class picture in the second or third grade. Remember how the teacher's pets got to be in the front? How the class clown made a face? This procedure requires the group to work non-verbally as members find their place for a picture of their group. The major difference between this picture and class pictures they may remember is that the camera is pointing down from the ceiling so people can face in different directions. Further, it is a movie camera so no one has to stand still. Chairs can be used for pedastals if someone ought to be on one. Several people could hold on to a long piece of string or yarn if they think they ought to be in different parts of the picture but want to show that they are somehow connected. People can stand close to those they work with regularly and far from those with whom they rarely interact. They can touch people they like to work with and turn their backs on those they don't. Someone may draw a chalk line on the floor to separate the "in-group" from others. The consultant can offer suggestions like these, but the group plans what should be depicted and how to depict it.

When the picture seems to be done, the consultant asks people to look around and see what has resulted. The group can then be seated to hear members answer questions like the following:

- What did it feel like to end up where you did in the picture?
- What did you observe about other people's positions? How accurately did they portray what you think is real?
- What was being portrayed by your position, that movement, or that object? Is that an important reality in this team?

A variation to the procedure includes asking one or more persons to stay out of the picture to serve as directors. Directors can tell others where to position themselves and what to do. When the directors are satisfied that the picture is ready, they explain it to the group. Other directors can be appointed until everyone who wants to has had a chance.

Another variation is to let the group decide how to portray their actual situation and then to use directors to help the group portray how things ought to be. These directors wouldn't try to change what others think is real, but would help people understand what they as individuals would like to see in the future.

The consultant can use this procedure to assess the structure of the team and also to diagnose how team members work together as they make their picture. He or she might point out similarities and discrepancies between what the picture shows and what team members have said in interviews or previous discussions. The consultant should take care not to impose his or her assessments and diagnoses on team members. It is their picture and it can and will mean to them only what they make of it.

This procedure was taught to us at different times by Mitchell Schwartz and Mary Ann Smith of Eugene.

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## Diagnostic Exercise: Rewards Game

Teams, groups, and organizations can establish four different kinds of structures for rewarding those who achieve goals.* The purpose of this exercise is to let participants experience the four structures, compare their effects on performance, self-esteem, anxiety, and other outcomes, and consider reward structures that apply in their day-to-day work with each other.

The four kinds of structures are:

1. Absent Structure: Rewards have nothing to do with goal attainment. Whether or not an individual accomplishes his or her goal, the rewards will be the same.

2. Individualistic Structure: The goals of individuals are independent. Whether or not an individual accomplishes his or her goal has no bearing upon whether others reach theirs.

3. Competitive Structure: The goals of individuals are linked together so that one individual can meet his or her goal only if others do not reach theirs. When an individual acts so as to reach his or her goal, the chances that others will reach their goals is decreased.

4. Cooperative Structure: The goals of individuals are linked together so that one individual cannot meet his or her goal unless others reach theirs. When an individual acts so as to reach his or her goal, the chances that others will reach their goals are increased.

To begin the exercise the trainer asks participants to prepare for four short games that will demonstrate four different ways a team or organization can work. The trainer says that discussion will follow about the advantages and disadvantages of each way as well as about the ways the team or organization usually works. Participants form equal-sized groups of three, four or five members. Extra participants can join the trainer as observers.

Game #1 simulates the absent structure. Each person in each group is given a color crayon, piece of chalk, or felt pen and each group is given a large sheet of paper. The trainer instructs each group to illustrate how group members feel about each other in one minute. No further instructions are given. When the posters are done they are displayed on the wall. Groups can be given a star for each team member with a birthday in January, February, or March. It is not necessary to give groups a star for this game, but if they are given, they must be (a) equally accessible to all groups and (b) unrelated to the poster.

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See Johnson, David W. and Roger T. Johnson. Instructional Goal Structure: Cooperative, Competitive, or Individualistic. Review of Educational Research, 1974, 44(2), 213-240 for research evidence on the effects of these goal structures.

Game #2 simulates the individualistic structure. Each person in each group chooses something he or she can do several times in one minute. Examples might include counting to ten, doing jumping jacks, or writing the name of the school on the blackboard. Participants then tell others in their group their goals in terms of the number of times they will repeat the act in one minute. "I'll count to ten 17 times" or "I'll do 50 jumping jacks" are examples of goal contract statements. The trainer keeps time while all members of all groups simultaneously try to do what they contracted to do. The number of people in each group who reached their goals is recorded on a large score sheet.

Game #3 simulates the competitive structure. Each group stands or sits in a circle. At the signal they begin passing a box of paper clips around the circle. Each person removes one paper clip as the box passes him or her; the passing and taking continue for one minute. The person on each team with the most clips is the individual winner and the team with the greatest total number of clips is the team winner.

Game #4 simulates the cooperative structure. Each group is given a box of paper clips and instructed to make the longest possible chain in one minute. A star is placed on the score sheet for any team that builds a chain of 100 or more clips in one minute.

To continue the exercise, the trainer gives a short lecturette on the four kinds of goal structures using the definitions on the previous page and reviewing the scoring system for each game.

Groups meet for five to ten minutes to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the four structures. The trainer encourages them to think about the effects that each structure had on individual and group performance, individual self-esteem or anxiety and group cohesion, and other outcomes they noticed. The trainer may have to emphasize that the discussion should focus on the reward structures rather than on personalities. Encourage participants to discuss how others rewarded them with behavior descriptions.

Each group then makes a one-minute report while the trainer records major points on a chart like the following:

| | Individualistic | Cooperative | Competitive | Absent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Advantages | | | | |
| Disadvantages | | | | |

The total group then discusses the kinds of rewards they experience in day-to-day work with each other. Both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards can be mentioned, but the group should identify the structure that is operating in each case. If the total group is large, the discussions can be started in small groups and followed by short reports of major points to the total group.

The game can conclude with the discussion of day-to-day goal structures. It could be extended by having the group brainstorm procedures that would make day-to-day life more advantageous and satisfying. Once the targets were identified, they could be prioritized and the group could discuss proposals for making the necessary changes come about. In other words, this game can provide a diagnosis of a team or organizational situation that could serve as the springboard to problem solving and decision making.

Possible variations of the game include different simulations for each of the four structures. More or less vigorous activities may be chosen to fit the constraints of space and participant energy. Only the scoring systems must remain comparable to those described.

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## Diagnostic Procedure: Wanted: Safe Space

Consultants try to find out two kinds of things from their clients before they begin an intervention. First, they try to find out what kind of work group members want to get done during the session. They do this by asking about items that are likely to come up on the agenda. Second, they try to find out what will make group members feel good during the session. They do this by asking what would make members feel competent, powerful, and liked by others.

The second question is often harder for group members to answer than the first. Norms often fail to support telling what one wants and needs from others. It is often the consultant's job to explain why this information is important and to provide group members with a way of making it public. This procedure from Bill Starling (Coordinator of the Cadre of Organizational Specialists in the Eugene, Oregon School District) provides such a way.

As the meeting begins, Bill asks everyone in turn the following question:

> "What do you need from us today to make this a psychologically safe space for you?"

He paraphrases each person's response and asks others to do so. After each person has had a chance, he summarizes the things that people want and need from others and asks the group to consider how the agenda should be ordered or modified to make those things happen. He suggests agreements that the group should make before the meeting by offering to interrupt the group if the requested agreements from individual people are not carried out.

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## Diagnostic Procedures: Examining Norms

Every team or organization has norms. A norm is a shared expectation that a given range of behavior in a specified context will be rewarded and that behavior outside of the range will be punished. Norms influence what the group accomplishes in terms of its tasks and how it goes about maintaining itself. Some norms facilitate task accomplishment and group maintenance; other norms get in the way.

Examining norms is an important first step in building helpful norms and getting rid of unhelpful ones. Consultants help teams and organizations examine their norms for this reason. This paper includes ideas on what things about norms ought to be examined and on how to go about it.

### Understanding What Norms Are

One procedure for helping people understand what norms are is to have them complete the following sentence by filling in the blanks.

_____ gets _____ when he/she/they
(Who) (Reward or Punishment)

_____ because we have a norm that
(Behavior)

supports _____.
(Norm)

Examples like these may help people get started.

Students in this school get good grades when they turn in assignments
(Who) (Reward) (Behavior)
because we have a norm that supports doing what you are told to do.
(Norm)

Teachers get criticism from the principal when they arrive after 8:00
(Who) (Behavior)
because we have a norm that supports being punctual.
(Norm)

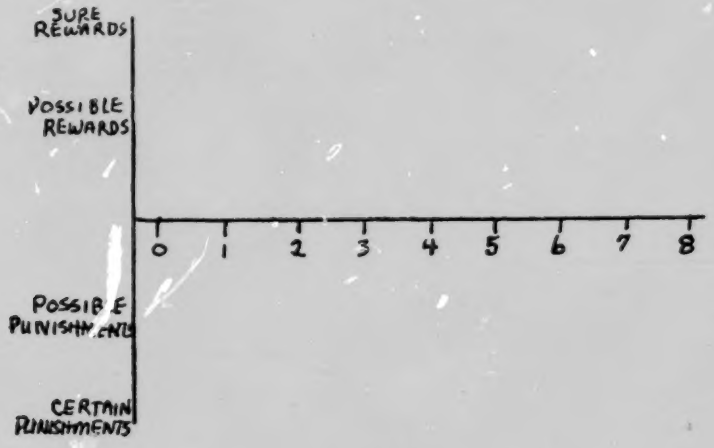
### Checking the Range and Salience of Norms

Sometimes the range of behavior that will be rewarded is very narrow as when "doing what you are told to do" applies to turning in assignments but not to who you make friends with or how much you like to eat spinach. Sometimes the range of behavior that will be rewarded is very broad as when "being punctual" applies to arriving at school, leaving the faculty room after a break, getting out for playground duty, and coming to evening meetings.

Sometimes the norm is a salient or strong one that carries with it a very rewarding reward or a very punishing punishment for deviation. For example, students might be expelled for smoking in the school or given a scholarship for athletic achievement. At other times the norm is not very important or

salient. For example, teachers may not pay very much attention one way or the other to what each other wears; no one gets compliments or a frown.

One procedure for checking the range and salience of norms is to complete a graph like the following by putting in a dot to represent how strong the reward or punishment will be for various behaviors in the range.




The numbers on the horizontal line might stand for the number of times the behavior is exhibited as in "times late to faculty meetings" or "assignments turned in." They can also stand for types of behavior as in teacher behaviors like 1=playground duty, 2=disciplining students, 3=helping a colleague, 4=preparing lesson plans, etc.

Each person in the group can fill out a graph and then all responses can be put on one large graph for discussion.

## Making a Norm Inventory

Most people assume that everyone else in the group knows what they know. Some may be downright shocked to find out that this assumption is not correct. One procedure to help group members check out the accuracy of their assumptions is to make a norm inventory. To do so requires a list of 10 or so norms. Such a list can be generated by the consultant or can come from statements group members write in the procedure for "Understanding What Norms Are." Each person in the group fills out a questionnaire like the following and then all responses are put on a large chart to start the discussion.

| In our group there is a norm that supports... | Definitely NO | Maybe No | Maybe Yes | Definitely YES |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| a) everybody having a chance to put an item on the agenda of group meetings | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| b) the chairperson and one or two others doing most of the talking | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| c) etc. | | | | |

## Finding the Norms About Norms

To repeat, a norm is a shared expectation that a given range of behavior in a specified context will be rewarded and that behavior outside of the range will be punished. One range of behavior that is of utmost concern to the consultant is the range of behavior having to with examining norms.

At one end of the range, the consultant might find a group in which it was never appropriate to talk about what people expect of each other and how those expectations influence what happens. At the other end of the range, the consultant might find a group in which people regularly and purposefully talked with each other about norms. Probably no group is always at the end of the range, but is somewhere in the middle. For example, it might be appropriate to talk about norms in a faculty meeting but very inappropriate to talk about faculty norms in front of students. It might be quite rewarding to discuss expectations about how tasks will be carried out but be quite punishing to bring up norms about using interpersonal communication skills.

Virginia Satir* suggests that the consultant might ask the following questions to help the group discover its norms about examining norms.

"1. As fast as the world changes it is easy to have out-of-date rules. Are you driving a modern car with Model T rules? If you find that you are, can you bring your rules up-to-date and throw out the old ones?

2. What have you worked out for making changes in your rules? Who is allowed to ask for changes? Our legal system provides for appeals. Does your (group)?

3. How are rules made in your (group)? Does just one of you make them? Is it the person who is the oldest, the nicest, the most handicapped, the most powerful? Where do they (the rules) come from?

4. What can you say...about what you feel, think, see, hear, smell, touch, and tast? Can you comment only on what should be rather than what is? What can you say about what you're seeing and hearing? To whom can you say it?

5. How do you go about it if you disagree or disapprove of someone or something? How do you question when you don't understand (or do you)?"

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*Satir, Virginia. Peoplemaking. Palo Alto, Ca.: Science and Behavior Books, 1972, pps.97-99.

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Team-Building Warm-Up: Portrait of Myself

Distribute newsprint and crayons (any art media may be used) and ask each team member to depict "My World as an Educator" or "My Inner Self" in the form of a picture. The picture may be abstract or realistic; it may contain words or symbols, if desired. Announce that the resulting "work of art" will be shared with the group to expand members' understandings of the values and style of each team member.

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Team-Building Warm-Up: Purse or Pocket

Ask team members to form a circle, bringing with them something from their purse or pocket that they are willing to share with the rest of the group. All members take a turn sharing one object and telling why this object is particularly meaningful to them.

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Team-Building Warm-Up: Hold it!

Team members stand in a circle. A beach ball or similar object is tossed to a member of the circle. As long as the person holds onto the ball, other members may give him/her feedback about behaviors recently observed or about feelings that need to be expressed. The recipient of the feedback remains silent. Whenever s/he want to, s/he may toss the ball to another team member. After everyone has had a turn (or more, if this is appropriate), the team members talk about how it felt to hold the ball, how long was it held, and how it felt to accept feedback without comment.

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Team-Building Warm-Up: Values Continuum

Designate an imaginary line somewhere in the room, such as from one wall to another. Declare one end of the line to be extremely positive or "I really agree," and the other end to be negative, or "I really disagree." Explain that the line becomes less positive gradually until it reaches the middle, the middle represents "no opinion " and the line becomes more and more negative as it extends to the strongly opposed end. Have team members listen to a statement such as "students should be involved in planning their own curriculum" or "teachers should set a good example outside the classroom as well as in" and ask group members to place themselves somewhere on the imaginary line. Encourage people to explain their reasons for their stance and have people at the extreme ends practice listening to each other. Also encourage participants to contribute value statements about which they would like reactions from team members.

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Team-Building Warm-Up: Who Am I?

Give each team member a blank card. If there are new members in the group, this may serve as a name card with the name written in the middle. Ask members to write responses to your statements in the four corners. For example, you might say, "In the upper right-hand corner put a picture or a word that tells where you would like to go on a vacation." Other suggestions for the corners would be "What was your most frightening experience?", "Who is the person you admire most?", or "What is your most prized possession?" Participants then mill around, sharing the reasons for the responses on their cards. The cards should be displayed in some way (taped to chests, hung on string around necks, etc.).

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Team-Building Warm-Up: Mother Goose

Ask team members to close their eyes and think of a nursery rhyme that somehow reflects their teaching style (or administrative style, if appropriate). At your signal, everyone will stand and begin saying the rhyme aloud. Members should attempt to find someone else who is saying the same rhyme; if they do, they can join forces and continue to search for others. At another signal, the group stops, sits down, and shares any feeling or event that they wish. The consultant may want to ask questions about what was experienced when an individual could not find anyone else saying the same rhyme and whether anyone switched rhymes in the middle of the exercise. Encourage people to share their reasons for rhyme selection.

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Team-Building Warm-Up: Queen for a Day

Have a collection of art materials available such as pens, scissors, glue, colored paper, and pipe cleaners. Distribute paper sacks large enough to fit over each person's head. Direct participants to make a mask of "What I'd like to be for one day." Encourage them to depict some serious change in character they would like to make with the intention of trying out some new behaviors. When all are ready, suggest that they put on their masks and try out the new behaviors for a short period of time (the masks tend to be hot and stuffy to wear). Afterward, lead team members in a discussion of what behaviors they chose, and, if appropriate, encourage the team to give a person an opportunity to try changes in his/her behavior without the mask.

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Team-Building Warm-Up: Found Object

Ask each team member to find an object in the environment that partly represents his or herself (this is especially effective if people can go outdoors for their search). Then, with the group in a circle, one member lays his/her object in a central place (a low table or a rug) and explaining reasons for the choice. Other members are encouraged to add appropriate comments about their relationships with that individual or about the appropriateness of the object. This activity is lengthy and can be emotionally draining for the participants.

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## Team-Building Exercise: Slow Down

Members of some educational teams constantly feel pressure, overload, or stretched in too many directions. An observer might see them running instead of walking from place to place, forgetting appointments, fighting or withdrawing from others, having accidents or even getting sick. An interviewer might hear them say, "I'm exhausted," "I can't tolerate this much more," or "This place is crazy."

Stresses may have their origin outside of the team, but many of the agreements that cause people to cope -- or fail to cope -- are controllable by the team . For example, a team of 6 primary teachers might be responsible for 180 students six hours a day and feel terribly overloaded. At the same time they might agree to a schedule for recess duty and their daily group sing-along that gives each teacher three fifteen minute breaks. With some clever rescheduling, they might arrange it so each person could have a forty-five minute break instead of three short ones one day out of six. Their stresses might seem less severe if they agreed to divvy up the work differently even though the same work would be there to do.

This exercise is intended to help a team discover and discuss the causes of stress that members feel. It can be used after interview or questionnaire data confirming the presence of stress in the team are fed back.

The exercise has two parts. In the first, team members are instructed to spend the next 15-30 minutes doing everything in slow motion. The consultant encourages them to move around, color a picture, have a cup of coffee and a doughnut, or anything else they want to do as long as they do it as slowly as they can. Talking is discouraged so that each person has complete control over what he or she does.

The second part of the exercise involves a quiet discussion. Team members are encouraged to get comfortable and sit or lie where they can hear others without straining. The consultant slowly and quietly encourages team members to talk about how it felt to slow down, the advantages that slowing down would have for day-to-day work, and proposals for future action. The discussion continues until everyone who wants to talk has done so.

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This exercise was taught to us by Rosalie Howard, a consultant in private practice.

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## Team-Building Exercise: Stress Styles

(An Exercise in Feedback)

This exercise is based on four common ways that people deal with stress.* The purpose of the exercise is to let team members give and receive feedback about how they deal with stress in the team and examine the effects of members' styles on the team's effectiveness.

The four common styles are:

> Placating: Behaving so that others don't get mad. Saying "Whatever you want is okay. I am just here to make you happy." Never disagreeing. Being syrupy, martyrish, bootlicking. Using a whiny or squeeky voice.
>
> Blaming: Behaving so that others will regard you as strong. Saying, "You never do anything right. What is the matter with you?" Being the fault-finder. Using a hard, tight, shrill, and loud voice.
>
> Computing: Behaving as though the threat were harmless. Saying things with big words--the longest words possible. Being calm, cool, and collected. Using a monotone to match a motionless body.
>
> Distracting: Behaving as though the threat were not there. Saying very irrelevant things that make no sense. Being busy, angular, unfocused. The voice is singsong and often out of tune with the words.

To start the exercise, each team member completes a chart like the one on the following page by placing everyone else's initials somewhere in the square. The position of a person's initials reflects the frequency with which he or she uses each style. The closer a person's initials are placed to one of the illustrations, the more frequently he or she is seen as using that style.

The exercise continues as team members report what they wrote on their individual charts in one of two ways: (1) members take turns reporting everything on their charts to all other members, or (2) all members report what they said about one member, then all say what they wrote about the next member, and so on. Reporters should be careful to describe observable behaviors and to report their own feelings about the other's stress style. Those receiving feedback should be careful to paraphrase and to check their impressions of the reporter's feelings.

The exercise concludes as the group discusses two topics: (1) how stress styles influence the effectiveness of the group, and (2) how the group worked together as it did the exercise.

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The ideas for stress styles and the drawings on the chart come from Virginia Satir. Peoplemaking. Palo Alto, Ca.: Science and Behavior Books, 1972.

PLACATING

BLAMING

COMPUTING

DISTRACTING

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## Team-Building Exercise: Drug Store Contest

Remember how small town drug stores used to have contests like, "Guess the number of pennies in the jar and win a Savings Bond" or "Estimate the number of candy kisses in the bowl.The ten who come closest win a sundae."?

It matters not if you are not old enough to have played those games because this exercise will give you that chance. The purpose of the exercise is to demonstrate the relationship between size of group and the quality of decisions it can make.

To conduct the exercise, the trainer should provide the following:

1. some kind of container (a jar, a bowl, a shoebox) full or partly full of a bunch of some small thing (popcorn kernels, paper clips, toothpicks)
2. a 3x5 card, pencil, and 10 of the thing in the container for each participant
3. a large piece of newsprint and a felt pen or a blackboard and chalk on which to do the data retrieval step

The exercise involves the following steps:

Step 1: Making Estimates

First, each individual writes his or her estimate of the number of things in the container at the top of the 3x5 card. Second, participants find partners and agree upon a single estimate which they write below the first estimate on their cards. Third, each pair joins another pair and quartets agree upon a single estimate which they write below the pair estimate. Fourth, each quartet joins another quartet and the octet makes and records a single estimate. Octets can be paired into 16s and 16s paired into groups of 32 if the group is large enough. Plan that it requires about one minute per person for each estimate; pairs need two minutes, quartets need four minutes, etc.

Step 2: Data Retrieval

The trainer helps participants record estimates from their cards on a chart like the following:

| Estimates by: | Individuals | Pairs | Quartets | Octets | All 16 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ___ ___ | ___ | ___ | | |
| | ___ ___ | ___ | | ___ | |
| | ___ ___ | ___ | ___ | | |
| | ___ ___ | ___ | | | ___ |
| | ___ ___ | ___ | ___ | | |
| | ___ ___ | ___ | | ___ | |
| | ___ ___ | ___ | ___ | | |
| | ___ ___ | ___ | | | |
| Averages: | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| Correct Estimate: | | | | | |

The Drug Store Contest, page 2.

Step 3: Discussion and Input

The trainer helps participants discuss what the data show and explain their explanations of the results. The trainer says that typically the estimates become more accurate as the size of the group increases because individuals pool their judgments and resources in interaction with others; in the case of this exercise, the 10 things in each person's possession at the beginning are symbolic of resources he or she had to offer the group.

Step 4: Debriefing

The trainer encourages the group to discuss questions like the following:

1. What did individuals do with their resources when they got in groups? What behaviors helped and hindered pooling of resources?
2. How did the different sized groups make decisions? How influential did participants feel in various decisions?
3. How were the processes of sharing resources and making decisions like or unlike the processes usually used by the team? How might typical processes be changed to result in higher quality decisions?

Variations of this exercise are possible and include: (1) if the size of the total group does not easily accommodate the pairs, quartets and octets, use multiples of three or some other groupings to increase group size at least twice; (2) instructions in making decisions by consensus might be given prior to the exercise and debriefing questions might be added to help participants reflect upon how they felt making decisions in this way; and (3)before the correct estimate is revealed, participants might be encouraged to to predict which estimate (an average or a single one) will be most accurate and to discuss their reasons for making the prediction as they did.

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## Team-Building Exercise: Consensus Task on the Values of Black and White Teachers

This consensus exercise is intended to give members of a team or organization the chance to practice making decisions by consensus. Like other consensus-making exercises, it presents groups with a decision unlike decisions they usually make and which someone else has answered through research. The presentation of research findings makes it possible for groups to determine the quality of their decisions against an absolute standard.

The exercise includes four steps and would take groups of 5 or 6 at least an hour to complete.

Step 1
Ask participants to read the introductory sheet (page 2 of this packet) and to do their individual ranking on the sheet provided (page 3 of this packet). Allow about 15 minutes for this part.

Step 2
Ask participants to form groups of 5 or 6 and to read the instructions provided in page 4 of this packet. You may choose to give these instructions verbally and to provide each group with a large chart on which to record the group rankings. Groups will need at least 30 minutes to read the instructions and do their rankings.

Step 3
Ask groups to debrief the experience so far by discussing questions like the following:

- -How accurate will we be when we see the research findings? What behaviors of group members helped us be this accurate or kept us from being more accurate?
- -How influential were different individuals? How many times did our individual rankings end up as the group's rankings? Did the more influential people have information the rest of us didn't have? What did we do to bring out the resources of the informed people?
- -How did we work together on this decision? How is that like or unlike the way we usually make decisions? How do we feel about consensus decision making?

Step 4
Hand out the answer sheets (page 5 of this packet) and help groups compute their scores. A complicated scoring method requires computing the difference between the group's rank and the correct rank for each of the 36 ranks and summing those differences. The group with the smallest score would win. A simpler method is to award a point for each correct rank out of the 36 so the group with the highest score would win. This takes 10 minutes or so to do.

A Shortened Variation

To cut the amount of time that would be needed for individual and group ranking, change the directions so that it is only important to get the first five ranks of each group correctly. Rank the top five choices of blacks and the top five choices for whites for a total score of 10.

## THE VALUES OF BLACK AND WHITE TEACHERS

John P. Sikula and Johanna Kasin Lemlech surveyed 73 teachers in the Los Angeles area, 32 blacks and 41 whites. There were 52 women and 21 men all of whom taught in inner-city or metropolitan schools. They had from one to 32 years experience, most of them in secondary schools. The represented a cross section of socio-economic classes and most were considered to be outstanding teachers by their peers and principals.

The survey included a list of 18 individual values. Teachers put a number one in front of the most important value, a two in front of the second most important value, and so one through number 18. Averages were computed for black and white teachers separately and a statistic called the Chi-square was used to see if differences between the two groups were significant.

On the next page are the 18 values ranked by these teachers. You are to guess how black and white teachers ranked them. Put a 1 beside the value you think black teachers mentioned most often in the first column and a 1 beside the value you think white teachers mentioned most often in the second column. Put a 2 in each column to show the second most important values for each group and so on down to an 18 in each column for the least important values to each group. You may or may not have the same number in both columns for each value.

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For a report of their research, see Sikula, J.P. and J.K. Lemlech. Do Black and White Teachers Have Different Values? Phi Delta Kappan 57(9), May, 1976, pps. 623-624.

| VALUE | RANK BY BLACKS | RANK BY WHITES |
|---|---|---|
| A comfortable life | _____ | _____ |
| An exciting life | _____ | _____ |
| A sense of accomplishment | _____ | _____ |
| A world of beauty | _____ | _____ |
| A world of peace | _____ | _____ |
| Equality | _____ | _____ |
| Family Security | _____ | _____ |
| Freedom | _____ | _____ |
| Happiness | _____ | _____ |
| Inner Harmony | _____ | _____ |
| Mature love | _____ | _____ |
| National security | _____ | _____ |
| Pleasure | _____ | _____ |
| Salvation | _____ | _____ |
| Self-Respect | _____ | _____ |
| Social Recognition | _____ | _____ |
| True Friendship | _____ | _____ |
| Wisdom | _____ | _____ |

Your group is to arrive at a single rank-ordering of the 18 values for black and white teachers that each member of the group will support as the single best prediction of the rank-order reported by the researchers.

This is an exercise in the use of consensus to make decisions. Consensus is not the same as unanimity. A vote of 8 to 0 is unanimous, but it may not be based on consensus. The essential feature of a consensus is not that a decision is agreed to by all members, but that all members understand the reasoning leading to the decision and are willing to support the decision. Each member may not completely agree with the decision, but all feel they have had a fair chance to influence the decision, that others have understood their information and opinions and taken them into account. The final decision, thus, is one which they understand and are willing to give enlightened support. In striving for consensus, then, the emphasis is upon reasoning about the problem and creating solutions together rather than on coercing and persuading others to adopt a particular solution.

In trying to reach consensus on the way the 18 values should be ranked for both groups, the following guides may help.

-Try to view disagreements and differences of opinion as showing the need for fuller communication and fuller mutual understanding rather than as evidence of stubbornness.

-Approach the task by sharing information, reasoning together, and exploring possibilities together rather than by attempting to change other persons' minds to coincide with your position.

-Avoid trading or averaging as a way of making decisions.

-Avoid changing your mind only in order to give the appearance of unanimity. Support only solutions which you understand and believe to have a reasonable basis.

-If the group is deadlocked and the issue seems to have been thoroughly examined, try to create a method of resolving the deadlock that all can support as the best course of action at that time. That is, try to develop a consensus on the method of deciding the issue.

Record the group's decisions on a large chart that looks like your individual sheet.

## WHAT THE RESEARCHERS FOUND

Sikula and Lemlech found that black and white teachers did value different things. The average rank-orders given by the two groups appear below. Only some of the differences in ranks were statistically significant. Those that were are marked with stars. The more stars there are, the more improbable and more significant are the differences in value rankings.

| VALUE | RANK BY BLACKS | RANK BY WHITES | SIGNIFICANCE |
|---|---|---|---|
| A comfortable life | 9 | 15 | *** |
| An exciting life | 16 | 17 | |
| A sense of accomplishment | 7 | 1 | * |
| A world of beauty | 13 | 12 | |
| A world of peace | 11 | 8 | ** |
| Equality | 5 | 10 | * |
| Family security | 1 | 6 | ** |
| Freedom | 6 | 9 | |
| Happiness | 8 | 5 | |
| Inner harmony | 3 | 3 | |
| Mature love | 10 | 13 | |
| National security | 17 | 16 | |
| Pleasure | 15 | 7 | **** |
| Salvation | 14 | 11 | ** |
| Self-respect | 2 | 4 | |
| Social recognition | 18 | 18 | |
| True friendship | 12 | 14 | |
| Wisdom | 4 | 2 | |

Note: An apparent difference of 6 on "A sense of accomplishment" is less significant than an apparent difference of 3 on "Salvation" because the statistic takes differences within groups as well as between them into account. There was evidently more variance within groups on "A sense of accomplishment" than there was on "Salvation."

## Team-Building Procedure: Resource #127 is me!

If a group is stuck or bogged-down in trying to figure out how to do something, the consultant might recommend this procedure. It allows group members to think about how they are resources that the group could draw upon --if not to solve this particular problem then to solve some problem in the future.

The procedure has two steps. Individuals first spend 15 minutes or so completing the questionnaire on the following page and posting it on the wall so all can see. Second, the group reads all the sheets and discusses for each entry on each sheet the question, "How could we use that resource to solve this problem?" The answers may seem silly or strange at times because the resource doesn't readily fit what seems to be needed, but encourage the group to think of a way to use everything.

After the procedure has been completed, the resource sheets should be permanently stored for future reference and the group can return to figuring out how to solve its problem. The procedure may provide them with new ideas and at least it should give them temporary relief from batting their heads against the wall.

---

The idea for the title of this exercise was given to us by Ruth Emory and Rene Pino of the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory in Portland, Oregon.

My name is: _____

I could introduce you to the following people:

_____ _____

_____ _____

I know a lot about how to:

_____ _____

_____ _____

I could lecture on the following topics for hours:

_____ _____

_____ _____

I would loan or share my:

_____ _____

_____ _____

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## Team-Building Procedure: Uncovering Role Conflict

Roles are manifestations of all the expectations that apply to given persons in given situations. A role definition can include expectations for output, methods of work, interpersonal values, and customs, but the group will reward only some behaviors and not others. Role-taking is always done as part of an interaction with other role-takers. If someone has the role of supervisor, others must take on the roles of supervisees. If it is said that some organizational members are performing poorly in their given role, what is meant is that the interactions between them and their role-reciprocators is producing a breakdown within their subsystem or between their subsystem and some other.

Two kinds of role conflict are common and possible in school organizations. First, incompatible expectations from different role-reciprocators can create stress for an individual as when teachers in the PE department want counselors to discipline students but teachers in the English department want counselors to leave discipline matters up to teachers and parents. Second, stress can arise when a person is acting in two incompatible roles at once, as when a principal is expected to help teachers work together and simultaneously to evaluate them for their individual performances. Both kinds of stress or conflict can arise over outputs, methods of work, values, or behavior. Conflict can arise over disagreements about the way roles are carried out, the way roles ought to be carried out, or about how to change the way roles are carried out.

The procedures described on the next page can be used by consultants to help members of a team or organization uncover the role-conflicts among them. Because the procedures require a rather large amount of writing and can generate an enormous amount of information, they are best used in small groups where at least two hours of protected time is available. The different steps can be done on different days as long as careful records of what is said are kept and reviewed before proceeding. In a large organization, small teams might use the procedures and then come together to share priorities they have identified. Sharing is particularly important if there is conflict among teams as well as within teams. For example, a team of primary teachers might uncover conflicts around the role of their team leader that they can deal with themselves; but they might also uncover conflicts between their team and the team of reading specialists and counselor that can only be resolved in a joint meeting of the two teams.

Step 1 Each person in the team does the following individually on a large piece of paper with felt pen.

1. List all the things you do in a typical week.
2. Put an "N" by those things that are newest in your role.
3. Put an "L" by those things you really like to do and wish you could do more often
4. Put a "D" by those things you really dislike doing and wish you didn't have to do

Step 2 Team members take turns describing what they wrote on their papers. Each person can give his or her entire presentation before the next person gets a chance or they can take turns describing new things, then liked things, and lastly disliked things. During this step, others in the group are not allowed to disagree, but may ask questions or paraphrase to understand what is being said.

Step 3 All team members contribute to a list of role-conflict statements. These may take the following forms:

1. Something Person A wants to do less often that others want him or her to continue doing or to do more often
2. Something Person B wants to do more often that there doesn't seem to be time for or that others want him or her to do less often
3. Things that two people do differently or for different reasons where others desire greater consistency
4. Two things that one person does that contradict each other; the "I can't be both a discipliner and an advocate for the disciplined at the same time" kind of conflict
5. Situations in which two people disagree about what a third person does or ought to do

Step 4 Priority role-conflict statements are identified. Statements may be of high priority either because they cause some problem for almost everyone or because they cause a big problem for one person or a few.

Variations

Instead of a list, each person can draw a big circle and cut it like a pie to show how he or she spends time in a typical week. A second circle could illustrate how the person would like to spend his or her time.

Role-conflict statements can be grouped as to whether they concern conflicts about the way roles are carried out (the situation), the way roles ought to be carried out (the targets), or what ought to be done to resolve role conflicts (the proposals). Situational conflicts may be resolved by collecting additional data. Target conflicts almost always require value clarification and negotiation. Proposal conflicts can sometimes be resolved by agreeing to try out one idea for a specified period of time and then to try out another idea for a specified period of time, and then to get back together and compare effects of the two proposals.

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## Team-Building Procedure: Helping Clarify Problems

### A QUESTIONING STRATEGY

Sometimes groups or individuals identify problems that are so big as to be overwhelming or so small as to seem uninteresting. A consultant can help a group stretch a problem statement so all of its pieces become clear and seem more manageable and squeeze a problem statement down to its essential elements so it can be viewed in correct proportion to the total environment. Both stretching and squeezing may be needed for a group to get clarity about its problems.

Stretching Questions Begin With WHAT

Consultant: What is this problem all about?
Problem Solver: Scheduling all classes for time in the gym.
Consultant: What is the gym all about?
Problem Solver: That's where students get physical education?
Consultant: What is physical education all about?
Problem Solver: Students learn games and skills and get a break from sit-down classwork.
Consultant: What is a break from classwork all about?
Problem Solver: (etc.)

Squeezing Questions Begin With WHY

Consultant: Why is student discipline a problem?
Problem Solver: Because students are running in the halls again.
Consultant: Why is running in the halls a problem?
Problem Solver: Because some of them fall down and get hurt.
Consultant: Why is a hurt student a problem?
Problem Solver: Because someone has to tend to the injury.
Consultant: Why is finding a "tender" a problem?
Problem Solver: (etc.)

Those who have tried this questioning strategy claim it works even when the "consultant" and the "problem solver" are one and the same person. It might be useful to have group members try the technique alone and discuss how it worked for them in trios before setting up trios in which one person plays "consultant," another the "problem solver," and the third observes the process and consequences of their interaction. The roles can be rotated in the trios every few minutes until each person has a chance to play all three roles. A debriefing discussion can focus on the usefulness of the questioning strategy as well as how each person felt in each of the roles.

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The strategy was adapted from ideas of Don Koberg and Jim Bagnall. The Universal Traveler. Los Altos, Ca.: William Kaufman, Inc., 1974, p. 57.

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## Team-Building Procedure: A Problem-Solving Method

Teams or organizations can be more or less clear about the way they solve problems. An elected school board, for example, might have an elaborate set of by-laws and policies that govern how it takes up a problem, deals with it, and disposes of it once a solution is found. A curriculum task force, on the other hand, might dig in a solve a number of problems without ever taking time to talk about how members worked together to solve problems and whether there might be a better way to do it the next time.

This method is primarily for groups that don't have a particular method or that don't talk about the one they are using. It requires a consultant who can lead the group through the steps and then help the group reflect upon what happened. If the group has no particular method for solving problems, the consultant guides the reflecting by asking questions like, "How did this method work for you?" and "How would you feel about using this method in the future?" If the group already has a method but does not talk about it, the consultant guides the reflecting by asking questions like, "How does this method differ from what usually happens in this group?" or "What features of this method are more effective and satisfying than features of the method you typically use?"

The method involves the following ten steps.

Step 1. Group members generate descriptions of situations (what is), targets (what ought to be), and proposals (what can be done to move from the situation to the target). This step is done in a brainstorming mode in which one idea triggers another without any evaluation.

Step 2. Group members focus on their target statements to narrow them down. They establish priorities and elaborate upon what will be happening when the agreed-upon target is reached. They imagine what it will feel and look like to be in the ideal condition using descriptions of feelings and behaviors.

Step 3. Group members focus on their proposals to narrow them down to a few that they think will take them to the target. They are clear about criteria like feasibility and desirability as they make these judgments. They list actions that must be taken to implement the proposal and talk about possible side effects that might occur.

Step 4. Group members focus on their situation statements to list all the forces that would help them take action and forces that would get in the way. They look for forces within individuals (feelings and behaviors), within the group (norms and roles), and within the context (others who will be affected if the group takes action).

Step 5. The group brainstorms more proposals for reducing the most important restraining forces and capitalizing upon the most important facilitating forces. The proposals are viewed as refinements or additions to those listed in Step 3.

Step 6. The group gets critical about what needs to be done as it lays out an action plan. People and dates are assigned to the actions the group wants to take so timelines and responsibility charts can be made.

Step 7. The group looks at the action plan and imagines everything that might go wrong with it. The plan is revised and modified in anticipation of these barriers and difficulties. The group also looks at the plan and imagines everything that might go right with it to decide if the effort will be worth the reward of reaching the target.

Step 8. The group takes the first steps in the action plan. It stops talking about what it will do and goes to work doing it. Responsibilities are carried out by those who agreed to take them.

Step 9. The group assesses the effects of the first steps by getting feedback on how things are going. Barriers and difficulties that were anticipated are compared to barriers and difficulties that have actually occurred.

Step 10. If the feedback in Step 9 reveals that something is amiss, the group revises the action plan by returning to step 1. This time the group brainstorms a new list of the situation (how are things different as a result of our actions?), the target (now revised because the first steps were off the track), and proposals (especially proposals to correct the original mis-steps).

The steps work well in the given sequence, but a given step may be done part-way and returned to at a later time if desired. Steps 2,3,4; 6,7; and 8,9 are easily recycled several times before going on.

The amount of time needed for each step will vary greatly from group to group and situation to situation. For example, if the group has available a lot of diagnostic and situational data, Step 4 may not take much time. If few people and not much time is needed to carry out the action plan, Step 6 might be handled in very few minutes.

Not all steps need be completed at a single sitting. The consultant might provide an overview of the 10 steps and join group members in a quick "run-through" around the problem of scheduling a way to complete all 10 steps.

If the group is just beginning to explore systematic problem solving or if the content of their problems is so engaging as to keep them from focusing on the process, the role playing situations on the next page may provide the "distance" needed to try out new group behaviors.

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## ROLE-PLAYING SITUATIONS

### Situation #1

The Board of Education in your district has just decided to operate schools without principals next year. According to the Chairperson of the Board, "A principalship is a series of functions, and not necessarily a person. The duties are being assigned to teachers, called leaders, who will function in teams and receive extra pay for the work. Our plan will give teachers a greater voice in decision making and will save the district money." Form into trios or quartets and imagine that each small group is the team of leaders in one of these schools. It is one month until the decision goes into effect as school opens for the year. Identify and solve one problem you will face using the ten-step method.

### Situation #2

Last year your school district started to teach parents how to teach their children at home. During the summer interested parents attended workshops taught by math and reading supervisors. Beginning in the fall of this school year, daily mini-lesson plans for parents have appeared in the newspaper. A computer in the central office can score a child's homework and print out extra course material if a parent requests it. A key feature of the program was to form a committee of parents, teachers and administrators to evaluate what happened. Decide who will portray parents, teachers, and administrators and become the evaluation committee. Imagine that it is your first meeting, that you don't know each other very well, and that you have the responsibility to organize yourselves for the work you will do. Identify and solve one problem you will face as you get organized using the ten-step method.

### Situation #3

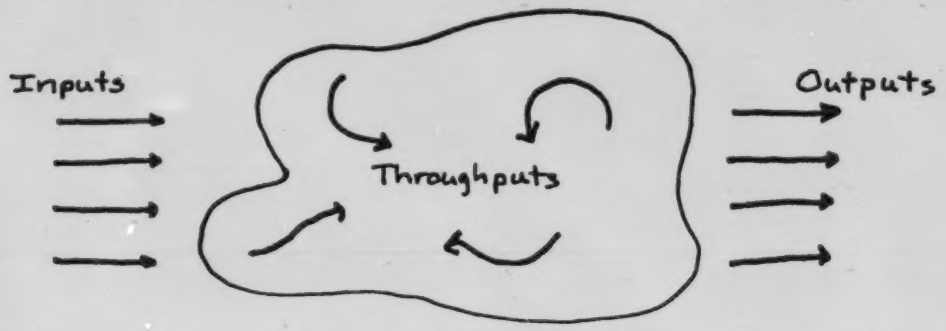
Voters in your district recently turned down the operating levy that would have supported a summer school program for under-achievers. The superintendent has managed to find a little money in the budget and suggests that the summer school directors make it go farther by launching an experiment in peer tutoring. With this experiment, a small staff of educators would train some students who could get academic credit for teaching other students. Form trios or quartets and imagine that you are the team of summer school directors. None of you knows much about peer tutoring and the library and files in your office contain little information. Identify and solve one problem that you will face in getting information you need to plan and operate the program. Use the ten-step method.

### Situation #4

The faculty senate of your school has just appointed a task force of students and teachers to take charge of orientation for new students next fall. Form small groups of five to seven and decide who will portray teachers and students on the task force. Identify and solve one problem about orienting new students using the ten-step method.

## Team-Building Procedure: Procedure for Monitoring Problem Solving

All groups, whether they know it or not, solve problems. That is, they regularly take in information that is intended by its sender to get the group to act in some way, do something with that information once they have it, and act so as to produce outputs. Thus, all groups as information-processing systems with inputs, throughputs, and outputs that can be monitored.




The purpose of monitoring inputs, throughputs, and outputs is to collect information that can by the group to study and improve the procedures it uses to solve problems. Monitoring is easily accomplished with keeping minutes if an entire problem-solving episode takes place in a single meeting. The recorder can describe the issue or problem that was discussed and what the group decided to do about it. Monitoring is more complicated when the problem-solving episode lasts over a long period of time or involves a number of people who don't always sit in on meetings of the group.

The procedure described on the following pages is particularly useful for complicated problem-solving episodes. It can be used for small episodes as well, but may prove to be more trouble than it is worth for the information that can be produced.

---

This procedure is an elaboration of one developed and used by Frederick F. Lighthall, Chair of the Educational Psychology Faculty at The University of Chicago. In a letter (May 6, 1976) he describes the need for training and role-clarification required to change the procedure from a pilot idea to a productive mechanism in a group.

The procedure has three elements:

-the monitor

-the monitoring form

-the group discussion

## The Monitor

The monitor may be a member of the group or an outsider like a consultant who is called in for this purpose. He or she should be allowed to attend all meetings and should be able to talk to group members between meetings as much as is necessary. Because this is a big and important role, the person should agree to play a lesser role in solving the problems so he or she will have time to do the monitoring. The role might be shared between two people if they touch base often enough to avoid duplicating each other's efforts or letting information slip through the cracks. The role might be rotated among several members of the group so that no one person has to remain an inactive problem solver for long.

## The Monitoring Form

A copy of a blank form appears on the next pages. One form is needed for each problem, so the monitor will need a notebook or folder in which to keep them. The form is complete when all the relevant questions are answered. If the monitor can't find the information to answer a particular question, the monitor might use the space to say that. To avoid a lot of copy-work, the monitor might append other documents or memos to the form and use the space to make a reference to the relevant parts of whatever is attached.

## The Group Discussion

Once a number of forms have been completed, the group may decide to examine the information to see what they can learn about their problem-solving procedures. The monitor might start the discussion with a summary of information recorded on the forms. A group that has little experience with discussions of its procedures may profit from having a consultant present to guide the discussion and help the group talk about the debriefing questions that appear on page 5.

47

MONITORING FORM

| Monitor: | Date Begun: | Date Finished: | Number: |
|---|---|---|---|

INPUT QUESTIONS

1. Who originally stated the issue or problem? Who sent the information in the hope that the group would act in some way?

2. Who referred the problem to the group? (Note: this may or may not be the same person or people in #1)

3. How was the input described? Was it in the form of a goal statement, a description of an undesirable situation, a proposal for action, or a question?

4. How was the input presented to the group? Did it come in writing, in a planned presentation, or as a casual comment made in a meeting?

5. What was the content of the message? What is the essence of the issue or the problem?

6. When did the group receive the information and recognize that there was a problem to be dealt with? (Note: there may be more than one date in the answer to this question)

THROUGHPUT QUESTIONS

7. When did the group solve the problem?

8. What form did the solution take? Did the group defer finding a solution, take no action at all, find and implement a solution, find a solution but defer action, establish criteria for an acceptable solution, or give general directions to someone else to solve the problem?

9. What was the solution?

Monitoring Form, p. 2

OUTPUT QUESTIONS

10. Who reported the solution to the person who referred the problem to the group?

11. Who reported the solution to the person(s) who originally stated the issue or problem?

12. When were these reports made?

13. How was the output reported. Was it sent in writing, in a planned presentation, or as a casual comment?

14. How did the receivers react to the solution? Did they like it? Did they think it was timely, relevant, and clear? (Note: there may be differences in reactions to the solution to be recorded here)

## DISCUSSION GUIDE

The following questions can be used to organize a summary of information on a collection of Monitoring Forms and to guide the group's discussion of the procedures it uses to solve problems.

1. Who brings problems to the attention of this group? How often do we define our own problems as opposed to referring other people's information? How clear and effective are the various human channels through which information comes to us?

2. What are the ways in which input comes to us? To we talk about goals, statements of undesirable situations, proposals for actions, or questions? What are the forms that are most likely to help us take notice of the information?

3. How is input presented to us? Do we get things in writing, as part of planned presentations, or informally. In what ways do we prefer having input presented to us?

4. How long does it take us to solve problems? Do we get slowed down by the ways we receive information, recognize that a problem exists, or solve problems? What processes might make us more efficient or help us produce solutions that were of higher quality or more acceptable to us?

5. What forms do our solutions take? Do we defer finding solutions, find solutions but defer action, establish criteria for acceptable solutions, or refer the problem to someone else? What forms work best for different kinds of problems?

6. How do we report solutions to those who initiate and refer problems to us? Who does the reporting? Do they make their reports in writing, in planned presentations, or as casual comments? Which ways work best for different audiences?

7. How do receivers of our outputs react to what they receive? Do they think our solutions are high quality ones? Do they find them acceptable? Do they think our solutions are relevant, timely, and clear? What do we and should we do when receivers react unfavorably to what we have done?

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## Self-Administered Aids

The following aids for team-building may be tried by the team-members themselves without outside assistance. Of course if relationships among the members are tense and fraught with stereotyping, social distance, and miscommunication, some outside consultation will be necessary. Given a reasonable level of readiness for team-building, a typical group of educators can use the following techniques to good effect. We present them within four categories: (1) Getting Better Acquainted; (2) Warming Up Just for Fun; (3) Diagnosing Your Own Team; and (4) Self-Administered Team-Building Activities.

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Getting Better Acquainted: Concentric Circles

Form two concentric circles, one group facing the other. At a given signal the circles rotate opposite directions and stop at another signal. The leader then calls out a subject for the facing pairs to discuss, such as "Share your name and your favorite hobby!" or "Share your name and the place you'd like to be right now!" Fifteen minutes or more works especially well when bringing two teams together for action planning.

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Getting Better Acquainted: Find a Partner

A leader calls out, "Find a partner!" When others have accomplished this, the leader gives a direction such as, "Talk to each other about your favorite movie" or "Now, talk about your most embarrassing moment." Fifteem minutes or more.

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Getting Better Acquainted: Find Somebody Who

Hand out a dittoed list of about 20 sentence endings to the introductory item, "Find somebody who...." (e.g., eats frog legs, likes to roller skate, loves Lawrence Welk's music, etc.). There should be a space beside each phrase where a person's name could be written in. At a given signal each person collects names of persons present who answer "yes" to the phrase. There are three rules: (1) You must ask permission to use a person's name, (2) you may use a name only twice, and (3) you may not use your own name. The first person to complete the list, "wins." About fifteen minutes.

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Getting Better Acquainted: Toss It!

Toss an object (a pillow, ball, role of tape) to another in the circle and say, "(Persons Name), tell me all you know about _____." For example, "Jane, tell me all you know about skiing," or "Joe, tell me all you know about Picasso." The person may tell actual knowledge or invent a response. Whenever the receiver is ready, s/he tosses the object to someone else and makes up a question of his/her own. Fifteen minutes or more.

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Getting Better Acquainted: Who Am I?

Polaroid pictures are taken of each member and people make autobiographical descriptions of themselves to accompany the pictures. Information might include hobbies, family statistics, favorite foods, etc. This activity is especially appropriate for a team coming together for the first time. The pictures and autobiographies may be displayed for continued sharing. About 45 minutes.

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Getting Better Acquainted: Newspaper Autobiography

Large quantities of newspapers are made available and participants search for parts of the paper that depict some facet of their personality. These bits are glued onto a large piece of paper (8 X 10 or larger) to be shared with the team at the end of the given time. About 30 minutes.

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Getting Better Acquainted: Interviewing

The group forms a circle and each person is given about five minutes to answer questions asked by team members. The individual may refuse to answer any question. This continues until each person has had a turn. About 30 minutes, depending upon the size of the team.

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Getting Better Acquainted: Swizzlestick

The team forms a tight circle, standing shoulder-to-shoulder with arms free. One member is in the middle and may be blindfolded or with eyes closed. The center person, with feet anchored, sways toward the outer participants. They gently catch and push him or her toward other members. After everyone has had a turn to be "swizzlestick," the team may want to discuss how it felt to be in the center, or how it felt to be a "catcher."

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Warming Up Just for Fun: Wind in the Trees

Choose partners. One is the tree and his/her feet are rooted to the floor, eyes closed. The partner is the wind and silently (music may be played, if appropriate) guides the movement of the tree by gentle suggestion of direction with hands. The tree responds to the wind and follows through the suggested movement with as much stretching and bending as desired. Switch roles of tree and wind. Allow time for partners to discuss reactions to this activity. About 30 minutes.

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Warming Up Just For Fun: Assassin

The team forms a circle, one person on the outside. Everyone puts his/her hands behind his/her back with eyes closed. The outside member touches one of the players and this person is now the secret assassin. When signaled by the outsider, the group opens eyes and begin to mill around, shaking hands and greeting one another. The assassin, at will, may assassinate someone by tickling his/her wrist while shaking hands. The assassinated person counts to 10 before giving any indication of the impending "death," then dies in as dramatic a manner as possible. If another player thinks s/he knows the identity of the killer, s/he calls the play to a halt and makes an accusation. If correct, the game begins over again with the assassin on the outside, selecting a successor. If the guess is incorrect, the accusor is "dead" and out of the game. A successful assassin kills all but one person ( and possibly that one, too). About 30 minutes.

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Warming Up Just for Fun: Murder

This game takes place with all members sitting in a circle. Pieces of paper are drawn out of a hat; one piece is marked. The person drawing the marked paper is the "murderer" and tries, by winking, to "kill" others in the circle. S/he may, at will, wink at another; the recipient of the wink, counts to 10, then dies dramatically. As in the game above, the object is to kill all before being caught, but anyone who mistakenly accuses an innocent person is out of the game. About 15 minutes.

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Warming Up Just for Fun: Human Machine

The team is divided into two or three subgroups. Each subgroup is instructed to devise a "human machine"--one that has moving parts, and one that includes all the people in the subgroup. It may or may not have a function. If it does, they may request that the other participants guess what function their machine performs. About 30 minutes.

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Warming Up Just for Fun: Sing-A-Long

Words of well-known songs are written on pieces of paper with duplicates included so that several people will be singing the same song. The pieces are mixed, and passed out. At a signal, everyone begins singing the song s/he received. The singers try to locate others who are singing the same song, join forces, and continue the search. This activity may be used to divide into smaller work groups. About 10 minutes.

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Warming Up Just for Fun: Billy Goat

The team forms a circle with one member in the center. The center person points to someone in the circle and says "Billy Goat!" The designated person droops hands beneath chin (for a beard) and says, "Baa!" The two people on either side must make horns on the head of the "billy goat" with one hand. The last one to respond exchanges places with the one in the center of the circle. Other animal names may be added to make the activity more complex. For example, the one in the center may say, "Billy Goat" or "Elephant." For the latter, the designated player makes a "trunk" and the two on each side give him or her big ears. Fifteen minutes or more.

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Warming Up Just for Fun: Mirroring

Silently, partners face each other and remain silent. Without deciding who is leader ahead of time, the participants begin moving arms, hands, etc., and try to stay mirror images of each other. Allow time to discuss what happened--how it felt to lead or be led, who was the first leader, and how it felt not to talk. Fifteen minutes or more.

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Warming Up Just for Fun: This is Your Elbow

The team forms a circle with one member in the middle. The center person chooses someone to stand in front of and points to a part of his/her own body, calls it by the wrong name, and counts to 10. For example, s/he might point to his/her ear and say, "This is my eye!" and begin counting. Before the count of ten, the person in the circle must point to the called out part (in this case, an eye) and say the opposite of what was previously said. In the example, this person would say, "This is my ear!" while pointing to the ear. If the feat is accomplished before the count of 10, the center person must try someone else; if not, the two exchange places. About 20 minutes.

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Warming Up Just for Fun: Cheer Leader

One member of the team leaves the room. The others decide who the "leader" will be. When the first member returns, s/he stands in the middle of the circle and tries to identify the "cheer leader." The people in the group perform whatever action the leader does without obviously watching that person. For example, the leader may tap a foot, then change to drumming fingers on knees, then sway back and forth. The rest of the group follows along, copying the actions. The person in the middle makes a guess as to the identity of the leader, if correct, another person goes out, if incorrect, the same person stays there in the center until the cheer leader is "found." About 20 minutes.

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## Diagnosing Your Own Team: What Kind of an Educational Team Are We?

In the following paragraphs you will find statements about educational teams followed by questions and space in which to write your answers. Members of your team may wish to write your answers individually and then discuss what each person wrote or to use the questions as a discussion guide and have one person record the major ideas expressed.

1. To obtain the benefits of teamwork, the educational team should be large enough to incorporate a variety of different members while it is small enough to allow effective face-to-face problem-solving discussions and collaborative decision making. With these specifications, the educational team typically does not exceed 15 members nor have fewer than five members.

- Who are the regular members of our team?

- How does our team's size work for and against us?

2. In most school districts there are potentially a multitude of teams at every level of the system. Teams may be complexly organized into a network of interlocked or connected teams. Some people may participate on two or more teams and be in a position to carry information from one team to another.

- To which other educational teams in this district are we connected?

- Which team members bring us information from or link us to other teams?

- Which connections and linkages are working well? Which aren't?

3. The work structure of a team refers to ways in which the team is organized to accomplish its primary purposes. Some tasks — like moving a 300 lb. refrigerator down a flight of stairs or two teachers teaching the same group of children in the same room at the same time — call for combining individual strengths and coordinating moment-to-moment movements. Other tasks -- like moving 300 lbs. of books down a flight of stairs or implementing a new budgeting procedure allow for greater latitude in building an appropriate division of labor.

- To what degree do we depend on one another to accomplish the overall purposes of the team?

- Around what tasks must we work interdependently?

- When do we work autonomously?

4. Time can be an important characteristic of a team. A teaching team that meets daily and expects to remain a team for the whole school year will face different problems than a district's budget committee that meets weekly for two months and disbands once its recommendations have gone to the board.

- How long is our team expected to remain a team?

- How much time do we spend together?

- What pace must we maintain to keep up with our work?

5. Space also influences the work structure of a team. For example, members of a parent and community team may not see each other between meetings. They may be too far from the school to have regular access to relevant and accurate information that is easily available to members of the school's management team.

- How does space — physical and interpersonal — define our work structure?

- From how far away must we come to work as a team?

- How much social distance do we experience because we come from different outside places or groups?

6. Some educational teams work quietly with a high degree of formality and even tenseness. Other teams seem much more pleasant, jovial, active and exciting. Some teams have a climate of competitiveness and social distance, while others appear highly cooperative and mellow.

- What words best describe the climate or feeling tone of our group?

7. Perhaps the most important single dimension of a team's psychological climate is its cohesiveness. Cohesiveness refers to the social interaction patterns that make team members feel included and involved. In cohesive teams, the members tend to feel influential, contributions are considered relevant and worthwhile, and appropriate influence methods are agreed upon by all.

- In what ways and how often is our team cohesive?

8. A more intangible characteristic of team climate is shared feelings of trust among members. In order for feelings of trust to exist among team members, they should see each other as competent and motivated to work collaboratively toward the team goals. Trust will disappear to the extent that team members experience one another's intentions or actions as competitive or harmful.

- To what degree and in what ways is trust a feature of our team's climate?

- Around what tasks do we experience low trust?

9. In a brief essay, Runkel (1974) points out that pain is an unavoidable fact of life in teams and organizations.* He says, "Much of our pain — certainly most of our psychological pain — is pain we give each other, and it is within our power to redistribute the occasions upon which pain arises. We can . . . share more equally the burden of pain . . (and) . . . choose the purposes for which we shall expose ourselves to pain."

- What kinds of pain do members of our team experience?

- What do we hope to purchase with the pain we experience?

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* Runkel, Philip J. Personal and organizational pain. In J. W. Pfeiffer and J. E. Jones (Eds.), 1974 Annual handbook for group facilitators. San Diego: University Associates, 1974. Pp. 148-149.

10. Some teams are more heterogeneous than others. Heterogeneous teams have members from different role groups such as administrators, parents, teachers, students, etc. Heterogeneity is difficult if traditional role relationships with differences in rights and responsibilities are not examined and changed to fit what the team must do. Heterogeneity is advantageous to the degree that resources the team needs become available.

- How heterogeneous is our team?

- How well have we overcome traditional role-relationship problems that stand in our way?

- How well do we capitalize on the unique resources of each member of our team?

## Diagnosing Your Own Team: Athletic Teams

Educational teams, like athletic teams, can vary in two important respects. First, teams can vary in the extent to which labor is differentiated so that different people do different jobs. Second,teams can vary in the extent to which efforts must be integrated so that people can't do their jobs unless others do too. Both differentiation and integration may be high or low.

A football team requires high differentiation and high integration. Players have different positions, but the team can't win unless everyone plays together.

A track team requires high differentiation but low integration. Players specialize in different events, but a person can win his or her event even if other players don't win theirs.

A volleyball team requires low differentiation but high integration. Players do essentially the same things because they rotate positions and no one wins unless the team does.

A golfing team requires low differentiation and low integration. Players all need the same skills, but one can win his or her match even if the others don't.

Members of your team might profit from discussing the kind of team you are and the kind of team you would like to have. Such a discussion can get started if each person completes the following sentence stems and then reports his or her responses to the total team. The discussion can focus on similarities or differences in impressions or both.

Sentence stems:

1) Our team is like a _____ team in that.....

2) I wish our team was like a _____ team because.....

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The notions in this questionnaire were first shared with us by Mary Ann Smith of Eugene, Oregon.

## Diagnosing Your Own Team: The Action Strategies Questionnaire

The action strategies of every team and organization are governed by "rules." The "rules" members live by are not necessarily the "rules" they say they live by. What are the "rules" that govern action strategies in your team or organization? For each of the "rules" below, check one space to the right to show how often members of your team or organization behave as if they were following the rule.

| | We behave as if this was the rule... | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Almost Always | Sometimes | Almost Never |
| 1. It is important to define goals and to try to achieve them. | ____ | ____ | ____ |
| 2. It is important to get and give valid information. | ____ | ____ | ____ |
| 3. Always strive to maximize winning and to minimize losing. | ____ | ____ | ____ |
| 4. Everyone should get to make free and informed choices. | ____ | ____ | ____ |
| 5. Minimize the chances that people will feel bad or say they do. | ____ | ____ | ____ |
| 6. Maximize the chances that people will be committed to choices and say so. | ____ | ____ | ____ |
| 7. It is most important to be rational, objective, and intellectual. | ____ | ____ | ____ |
| 8. It is most important to let members take initiative and experience success. | ____ | ____ | ____ |
| 9. Always strive to design, manage, and take charge of the environment. | ____ | ____ | ____ |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 10. Always strive to control tasks jointly rather than unilaterally. | ____ | ____ | ____ |
| 11. Guard the right to define, own, and execute tasks. | ____ | ____ | ____ |
| 12. Protection of self is a joint enterprise directed toward growth. | ____ | ____ | ____ |
| 13. Each person must protect himself or herself. | ____ | ____ | ____ |
| 14. Always seek to reduce blindness about inconsistencies and incongruities. | ____ | ____ | ____ |

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# SCORING THE ACTION STRATEGIES QUESTIONNAIRE

The items in this questionnaire are adapted from ideas of Chris Argyris and Donald A. Schön . Theory in Practice: Increasing Professional Effectiveness. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1974.

Argyris and Schön describe competent, effective, professional behavior as including two components: (1) the willingness to examine "rules" or theories-in-use publically, and (2) the willingness to be open to change as a result of the examination.

The even-numbered items in this questionnaire describe the "rules" for action strategies that promote competent, effective, and professional behavior. The odd-numbered items describe the "rules" that inhibit this behavior.

To find out the extent to which effective professional behavior is promoted...

a) Multiply the total number of times members checked "Almost Always" on an even-numbered item by 2 and put the number here.....____

b) Multiply the total number of times members checked "Sometimes" on an even-numbered item by 1 and put the number here.....____

c) Compute the sum of (a) and (b) here..... ☐ PROMOTING SCORE

To find out the extent to which effective professional behavior is inhibited...

a) Multiply the total number of times members checked "Almost Always" to an odd-numbered item by 2 and put the number here.....____

b) Multiply the total numbers of times members checked "Sometimes" on an odd-numbered item by 1 and put the number here.....____

c) Compute the sum of (a) and (b) here..... ☐ INHIBITING SCORE

The accuracy of the scores can be verified by observing the team's or organization's response when the scores are reported and anwering these questions:

1) Do members eagerly examine the scores by suggesting causes for and consequences of them?

2) Do members eagerly request and suggest proposals for change?

The more eagerly a group does these things, the more effective professional behavior is being promoted.

## Diagnosing Your Own Team: Quality of Life Questionnaire

How does it feel to be a member of this team or organization? What features of life in this team or organization are satisfying and stressful? Describe the quality of life by checking one space on each of the lines below.

BORING /___/___/___/___/___/___/___/ INTERESTING

MISERABLE /___/___/___/___/___/___/___/ ENJOYABLE

LONELY /___/___/___/___/___/___/___/ FRIENDLY

DISAPPOINTING /___/___/___/___/___/___/___/ REWARDING

HARD /___/___/___/___/___/___/___/ EASY

TIED DOWN /___/___/___/___/___/___/___/ FREE

Adapted from Campbell, Angus. Subjective measures of well-being. American Psychologist, 31 (2), Feb. 1976, pps. 117-124.

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## Diagnosing Your Own Team: How Are We Doing?

Starting with the earliest literature in group dynamics, two general categories have been described as including the activities necessary for group effectiveness. These have been referred to as task functions and maintenance functions. We refer to them here as work and social-emotional processes. The work processes help to accomplish the task-oriented, substantive goals of the team, while social-emotional processes help the team maintain its internal cohesion and interpersonal feelings of good will and mutual respect.

One way to diagnose how your team is working is to discuss--at the ends of several meetings in a row--how the work and social-emotional processes fit together as you work together in meetings. In a sense, your team's effectiveness depends on how you match the work and social-emotional processes to the needs of team members and to the demands imposed by the external and internal pressures on the team. Since your team's effectiveness can never be judged in terms of what happens at one meeting, we suggest that you make such a discussion a regular part of your meetings and monitor your progress over time. The following questions may launch you in this direction.

(1) What is the pace of the team? Are we slowing down or moving ahead? Do we feel satisfied with the ground we are covering?

(2) Are we expressing our dissatisfactions directly? Do team members have uncomfortable feelings about the way we are doing things? Are they being expressed?

(3) What does our participation look like? Who is participating and who is not participating? Where do the team members who are participating least, stand on the issues? Are we hearing everyone's views?

(4) Are we helping each other (clarifying, supporting, giving information, paraphrasing, summarizing, encouraging, etc.) or are we arguing each other down? Are we listening to each other?

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## Diagnosing Your Own Team: The Short Survey

It doesn't take long to get a quick sense about how members of your team feel about team life with this survey. Write the three items on a chalkboard or piece of newsprint and pass out small sheets of paper to each person. Each person writes three numbers on his or her paper, corresponding to a response for each of the three items. Pass in the papers with no names on them and have one person tally the number of times each number was chosen in each item. Discuss what the individual ratings mean by answering questions like: (1) What feelings result from these features of our group? (2) How much in agreement are we about the way our group works? (3) What agreements could we make that would change our situation in a favorable direction?

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Others tend to ignore what I say | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Others pay attention to what I have to say |
| Team members are at odds with one another | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Team members are working together quite well |
| I have participated very little | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | I have participated very often |

## Diagnosing Your Own Team: When Are We Effective?

Group productivity, especially in educational settings, tends to be an obscure and difficult thing to measure. Our point of departure for understanding team effectiveness encompasses three features of team effectiveness: adaptability, productivity, and satisfaction. Adaptability refers to the team's ability to grow and survive in relation to its environment. Productivity refers to the team's ability to get its work done. Satisfaction refers to the team's ability to help members feel good about themselves, to feel they are fulfilling some of their personal goals, and to feel a sense of challenge and growth.

Members of your team can complete this questionnaire by choosing one response on the right after each statement about an effective team. You may do this individually and then discuss your responses or use the statements as a discussion guide and have one person record the most common opinions.

| | We should do this . . . | |
|---|---|---|
| | just like we do now | better than we do now |
| 1. We discuss our own goals and the description of goals is specific and clearly understood by every team member. | _____ | _____ |
| 2. We have ways of knowing when we are moving toward our goals and when our actions are taking us in some other direction. | _____ | _____ |
| 3. We compare our movement toward our goals with earlier plans and try to make adjustments when we need to. | _____ | _____ |
| 4. We engage in problem solving for changing our methods of moving toward goals when things are not going well. | _____ | _____ |
| 5. We keep in touch with each other's ideas and skills so as not to miss available alternatives for action. | _____ | _____ |
| 6. We have efficient ways of setting new action steps in motion toward the goal. Plans are not so rigid that change in plans becomes impossible or painful. | _____ | _____ |
| 7. We "keep up" with our environment by listening to a wide range of views and maintaining varied sources of information. | _____ | _____ |

| | We should do this . . . | |
|---|---|---|
| | just like we do now | better than we do now |
| 8. We discuss how we and others view our team and its performance and find ways to deal with conflicting inputs when they occur. | _____ | _____ |
| 9. We maintain flexible expectations about one another and attitudes that encourage risk taking. We are aware of the diversity in our team and can develop it when needed. | _____ | _____ |
| 10. We are able to act as well as to talk and plan. We act because we want to do something more than react to things others tell us. | _____ | _____ |
| 11. Everyone pitches in collaboratively when there is work to be done; our team doesn't just "look" productive because some of us work diligently and bear the burdens of the non-productive, low-effort rest of us. | _____ | _____ |
| 12. We have efficient ways of solving problems, making decisions, and assessing progress. It doesn't take us "forever" to get simple things done and we don't get "bogged down" in procedural hassles. | _____ | _____ |
| 13. Individuals on our team are conscious of their own potential and are becoming better able to realize their potential in ways that make sense to all of us. | _____ | _____ |
| 14. We do not ignore each others' seriously intended contributions. When we speak, we know whether others heard us, understood and agreed with us, understood but disagreed with us, or thought our comment irrelevant. | _____ | _____ |
| 15. We check to make sure we know what someone means before we agree or disagree with their contribution. | _____ | _____ |
| 16. We speak for ourselves and do not attribute our feelings or opinions to others or give the impression we are speaking for others when we are not. | _____ | _____ |

| | We should do this . . . | |
|---|---|---|
| | just like we do now | better than we do now |
| 17. We view all contributions as belonging to the group, to be used or not as the team decides. Members don't argue about who owns the idea because the idea will be praised or criticized apart from the person who contributed it. | _____ | _____ |
| 18. We participate in different but complimentary ways that reflect our different interests and capacities. | _____ | _____ |
| 19. Whenever we sense that we are having trouble getting the work done, we talk about that and try to solve the problems. | _____ | _____ |
| 20. We recognize that we are always making decisions and we do so openly and purposefully, rather than by default. | _____ | _____ |
| 21. We express disagreements freely and bring conflict out into the open so we can deal with it. We would rather have conflict in the open where we can manage it than to have it disguised. | _____ | _____ |

## Diagnosing Your Own Team: How Smooth Are Our Team Processes?

Of all the processes through which organizational teams become adaptable, productive and satisfying to their members, we have identified seven that your team may want to work on. These are: communicating, setting goals, managing conflicts, solving problems, making decisions, holding meetings, and getting extra help.

This questionnaire should help your team collect some of the information you will need to decide whether to work at improving team processes and the order in which to tackle process problems you may have. What follows are brief descriptions of each process. After each description there is a box to the right and a space in which to write additional comments. Each person should complete the questionnaire by writing one of the following numbers in each box and jotting down comments if he or she wishes to explain his or her vote.

3 = This process is causing our team a great deal of trouble. We ought to find procedures to improve it as soon as possible.

2 = This process is causing our team some trouble. We ought to find procedures to improve it sometime.

1 = This process is not causing our team any trouble. We ought to ignore new procedures for a while and check back later.

Then make a tally sheet like the one below and record each person's vote. Comments may be made during a discussion.

### Tally Sheet

| Process | Number voting 3 | 2 | 1 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Communicating | | | |
| Setting goals | | | |
| Managing conflicts | | | |
| Solving problems | | | |
| Making decisions | | | |
| Holding meetings | | | |
| Getting extra help | | | |

In deciding on the order in which to tackle improvement of your team's processes, you might use either of two strategies. The first strategy would call for tackling the most severe process problems first (your 3s) and letting the lesser troubles wait. The second strategy would call for "getting your feet wet" by first tackling one of the lesser process problems (your 2s or even your 1s). Your decision will probably be based on considerations like the following:

(1) All of the processes are interdependent; that improvement of one will change the severity of problems with others.

(2) Some processes are harder to change than others in the sense that they require more risk taking.

(3) The order in which the process-improvements procedures are presented in the yellow pages is one we recommend. An equally good order would involve putting the last two (meetings and getting help) first.

## COMMUNICATING

Dysfunctional Process: What we say to each other is inconsistent with our bodily gestures, tone of voice, and expression. Only a few people talk or are talked to. Most communications are "one-way" or otherwise allow little mutuality and reciprocity. It is "taboo" to talk about feelings in our team.

Functional Process: There is consistency between verbal and nonverbal messages we send each other. Our communications are aimed at all members of our team. When one person introduces an idea, others attempt to show how they understand what the sender means; all members engage in active listening. Feelings and opinions are expressed freely.

Comments:

Rating

## SETTING GOALS

Dysfunctional Process: We rarely talk about what we are striving to accomplish. Our individual values are never talked about and we never consider whether reaching team goals will meet our individual needs for activity, achievement, affiliation, and power. What we say are our goals does not match what we do.

Functional Process: Goals are discussed frequently and all of us are clear about where we are headed. We recognize and talk about our values and how these mesh with our team goals. Team goals are designed to maximize the chance that we all will satisfy our needs for activity, achievement, affiliation, and power. There is no difference in the ways our goals are expressed in word and deed.

Comments:

Rating

## MANAGING CONFLICTS

Dysfunctional Process: Problems are allowed to reach crisis proportions before we deal with them; we spend a lot of time "putting out fires." Then we have to hurry to find an immediate solution which often turns out to be no solution at all. When a problem recurs, we act like rabbits, freezing still in our tracks and hoping the trouble will go away without seeing us.

Functional Process: Problems are anticipated before they get severe or too big to handle. We take care and time to find lots of possible solutions to enhance our chances of finding the best one. We eagerly search for problems each time we sense a gap between the way things are and the way we want them to be.

Comments:

Rating

## SOLVING PROBLEMS

Dysfunctional Process: Conflict goes unrecognized most of the time. We kid each other to disguise the real issues. All conflict is viewed as "bad" instead of as a way to help people make use of resources that otherwise would go unnoticed. All conflicts are treated alike whether they arise because of differences in interpersonal style or differences in roles required to get the work done.

Functional Process: Conflict is accepted as inevitable because people have different needs, values, and attitudes about team goals. Once a conflict is discovered to be sapping energies or demoralizing, we deal with it immediately. Conflicts that arise for different reasons such as power struggles, stress imposed from without, or role conflicts, are managed in different ways.

Comments:

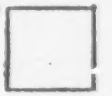
Rating

## MAKING DECISIONS

Dysfunctional Process: Most decisions are handed down by one or a few members of our team. Usually these decision makers are those with legitimate authority; rarely are the decision makers those with the most information. Many decisions are made by default or turn out to be "non-decisions" where we each do what we want regardless of the discussion. When we vote, no one knows what the losing minority intends to do.

Functional Process: We all participate in making decisions that affect us, delegating decisions that affect only one or a few to those people. We don't back away from the tough decisions and try to achieve crisp, clear decisions when we make them. The time it takes to make decisions by consensus is less important to us than the quality and acceptability of decisions we get that way.

Comments:

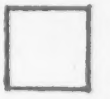
Rating 

## HOLDING MEETINGS

Dysfunctional Process: We never clearly decide who will convene the meeting or record minutes; the responsibilities fall to the same people over and over again. Unimportant topics are discussed and important ones hurried through. Only a few people participate, no matter what we are talking about. Meetings are all work -- we never stop to talk about how we are working together.

Functional Process: Convening and recording responsibilities are clear and shared. We establish an agenda, allocating time based on priorities of items to be discussed. Participation is widely dispersed. We regularly discuss problems we have with team processes and end our meetings with a final debriefing to determine everyone's thoughts and feelings about how we are working as a team.

Comments:

Rating 

## GETTING EXTRA HELP

Dysfunctional Process: We never ask outsiders to help us improve how we work together. We consider groups that do as "weak" and as admitting their "weakness." Once in a while an outsider comes to our meetings, but we never talk in advance about how we could benefit from that person's presence. We either "go it alone" or get "ripped off."

Functional Process: We call upon outside process consultants from time to time to help us get a fresh view of things, an outsider's perspective, and ideas for process improvement procedures we don't have. Before we ask for help, we get clarity about what we want the consultant to do for us and what we are willing to give in return.

Comments:

Rating

## Self-Administered Activities: Biographies

Team members sometimes know very little about each other except for behaviors that are exhibited in meetings. They are forced to live with first and faulty impressions of what others are like unless they get a chance to check out how accurate the impressions are. This procedure gives them that chance.

The procedure can be completed in an hour or two or might become an assignment that members work on between other activities in the course of a longer intervention. In either case, participants need to be protected from outside interference while they prepare the biographies and discuss them.

Biographies are prepared on large sheets of paper hung on the wall. Each participant has a sheet of paper with his or her name at the top. Each participant can help prepare everyone else's biography. Biographies can include any or all of the following:

- -a picture from a magazine of something this person would own or do
- -an article from a newspaper that could be about this person if the name was different
- -a famous quotation written in felt pen that fits the person
- -a drawing, cartoon, or doodle
- -etc.

The basic task is to fill each person's sheet of paper with representations of impressions that the biographer wishes to check out. As the pictures are completed, each person takes a turn to answer questions from others like: (1) "I get the impression that you might like to have more time to spend working in your yard. Is that true?" or (2) "You strike me as a person who would be thrilled to be elected to public office. Am I accurate?" The consultant encourages all group members to use good communication skills. The person answering questions about him or herself would paraphrase the questions and describe his or feelings in response to them. The question-askers would describe behaviors that led them to their impressions and would always follow the impression check with a question to determine its accuracy.

A general discussion might follow about impressions and answers that were particularly surprising or causes and consequences of the fact that there were suprises. The discussion can also lead to describing similarities and differences among team members and the degree to which variety is valued and expressions of variety rewarded. The procedure can be concluded by making a list or file of "resources in our group that we didn't know we had."

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## Self-Administered Activities: Agenda Building

Definite procedures for building agendas are very much a part of the life of some groups. They prepare for their meetings with as much care and discipline as they conduct them. In other groups, a free-for-all style is followed in which it would seem that group members could not tell the differences between clarifying an agenda item, on the one hand, or defending or attacking a proposal, on the other.

Consultants can encourage and help groups adopt a disciplined style with procedures like the following.

### Procedure #1: The Agenda Wall

A large piece of paper is hung on the wall several days in advance of the meeting. Group members write up agenda items as they think of them and the convener of the meeting makes sure the paper gets to the meeting room. The paper is divided in five columns, four of which are filled out before the meeting and the fifth of which becomes the first order of business.

- -Column 1 is for the topic of the agenda item
- -Column 2 is for the name(s) of people who will bring up the item
- -Column 3 is for the type of action that will be required during the meeting, e.g., "information only," "consensus decision," "discuss," "appoint a committee," etc.
- -Column 4 is for the amount of time estimated for the action
- -Column 5, the one filled out at the meeting, is for the order in which the items will be attacked.

### Procedure #2: Using Cards

At the beginning of the meeting, each member gets four or five 3x5 cards and something to write with. On each card the member writes one thing that he or she wants the group to have accomplished by the end of the meeting. Members then mill around the room, discussing their cards with various partners. The purpose of the discussion is for each person to find at least one person who will agree that the item is (1) feasible and practical to do in the meeting, (2) important and desirable to do in the meeting, or (3) enough like another person's item so they can be combined. Members hang on to the cards with good items and discard the impractical, unimportant, or too unique cards on the floor. The remaining cards are posted, reviewed, and marked with the order in which they will be attacked.

### Procedure #3: Trimming the Agenda

If the total amount of time required for all agenda items exceeds the time available, some trimming is neccesary. Trimming can be a painful process, especially if the group is already feeling overwhelmed. Trimming can be expedited with this two-step procedure. First, each member gets a chance to finish the sentence stem, "I'll feel good (or competent, powerful, liked) at the end of the meeting if we have....". Second, small groups meet for 5 or so minutes to use the information about feelings as they write up a shorter agenda for presenting to the total group.

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Ideas for procedures #2 and #3 came to us from Rene Pino and Ruth Emory of the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory in Portland, Oregon.



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## Self-Administered Activities: Procedure for Goal Setting

A large group such as a faculty or student council needs procedures for involving people in setting general goals. Often it is less than satisfactory to have one person or a small group prepare a document for others to react to. Problems with this method include the fact that not all interested parties may be verbally facile enough to work from the printed word and the complaint that the original statement did not emerge from the thoughts of everyone. This procedure is an alternative.

The first step of the procedure involves dividing the large group into small working teams of five to eight persons. Teams can be formed by asking each person to get with those with whom he or she wants to work, by counting off, or by using geographical proximity (all those in this corner go here and those of you in that corner go over there).

Second, each team is given the following materials and instructed to make a mural without talking.

- -a piece of paper at least 3x6 feet in size
- -a box of colored chalk, color crayons, and felt pens
- -a few small pieces of construction or wrapping paper
- -some magazines with pictures
- -a bottle of glue or paste
- -pieces of tape to hang the mural

Each team will need at least 30 minutes to make its mural.

Third, teams discuss their murals for about 20 minutes until everyone is clear about what all team members meant by the things they put on the mural. Teams can also discuss how it felt to make a mural together at this time.

Fourth, each team takes 2 or 3 minutes to describe its mural to the other teams. The audience can ask clarification questions after each presentation or all questions can be held for the end.

Fifth, each team spends 30 minutes to list the five most important goals that were portrayed in the different murals. A team might wish to brainstorm a longer list first before deciding which five should have top priority. Goals should be stated in the form of "We want more...." or "We want less...". Examples of goals we have seen include, "We want more equal partnership of teachers and administrators," "We want more recognition and acceptance of individual differences," and "We want a more attractive building with fewer dull colors."

Sixth, teams present their lists of five valued goals and the total group discusses similarities and differences among the lists. Goals that are mentioned by more than one team are given higher priority than those that were derived by only one group. Consultants can help the total group make the final list of 10 or so most important group goals.

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## Self-Administered Activities: Negotiating Expectations

All the expectations of people in a group that apply to a particular person in a particular situation define that person's role. Expectations take the form of "In situation X I want you to do Y and not Z." If the expectations of others are clear, a person can predict what he or she will be rewarded and punished for doing in a particular situation.

Expectations can be held for a moment or for a long time. This procedure is useful for helping group members negotiate expectations of either kind.

Negotiation is necessary under the following circumstances:

- -group members expect the person to do something he or she can't do without help
- -group members expect the person to do something he or she doesn't want to do without more or different rewards
- -different group members expect different things of the person
- -group members expect the person to do things that are impossible to do at the same time

The consultant must provide the following materials for this procedure:

- -a large sheet of paper for each person in the group
- -enough 5x8 cards for each person so he or she can make out a card for each other person
- -pens or pencils and tape

The procedure has three steps.

Step 1
Each person fills out a card like the following for each other person in the group and posts it on the wall near peoples' big sheets.

Things I wish you would do more often than you do now:
- -
- -
- -

Things I wish you would do less often than you do now:
- -
- -
- -

Step 2

Each person goes to his or big sheet and reads all the cards that have been placed by it for him or her to read. The person then makes three lists on the large sheet: (1) things I agree to do more or less often than I do now, (2) things I don't agree to do more or less often than I do now, and (3) things I can't agree or disagree with because I don't have enough information.

Step 3

Group members mill to read each other's large sheets and then form as a total group to discuss topics like the following:

- -agreements that we are particularly glad got made
- -agreements we wish had been made that we'll have to come back to another time
- -agreements that can be made if negotiation occurs,e.g., "I'll do that less often if you will do this more often" or "I'll do that more often if you don't expect me to do this more often too."

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This procedure was described to us by Rene Pino and Ruth Emory from materials they have developed at the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory in Portland, Oregon.

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## Self-Administered Activities: "So What Are the Problems?"

### A SIMULATION

This simulation is designed to let groups or collections of individuals practice helping a person get clear about his or her problems. It includes the use of a particular problem-solving model called STP and can also be used to teach people how to use that model. The situation described in the simulation involves information about the learning environment in a particular classroom. As such, it may be most appropriate for groups of teachers who would have at least some idea of what that might be.

The simulation can be adapted so as to be more appropriate for other kinds of groups by making substitutions in Steps 1 and 4. In Step 1 it is only necessary to describe a situation in which one person can be the helper, another the helpee, and others can imagine themselves as both helping and being helped. In Step 4, the data presented might be the results of a community opinion survey, tallies of voting patterns on school bond elections, achievement test scores in the district, or other kinds of information that the group might have occasions to grapple with.

The following directions go to participants who are arranged in trios or quartets and have access to large sheets of newsprint, felt pens, and tape.

#### Step 1

Spend about 5 minutes deciding which role each of you will play.

> One of you should play the teacher in a sixth-grade classroom who has been trying to find out about the learning environment in his or her classroom. The teacher has asked for help in identifying problems from some data she or he has collected. The teacher plays the helpee.
>
> One of you is the school counselor who has been urging teachers to collect these kinds of data. The teacher has asked you to be the helper as he or she tries to identify problems from some data.
>
> Others of you should play teacher-colleagues of the sixth-grade teacher. Since you might try to collect similar kinds of data in your classrooms, you are in a sense both helper(s) and helpee(s).

Step 2

Your group is to use the STP Problem-Solving Model to help you figure out what the problems are. Review the following statements by Fosmire and Wallen (undated mimeo) for about 10 minutes.

The STP Model is a method of organizing information to define a problem and to resolve or manage conflict that occurs in creating a solution. Information is organized into three interrelated dimensions: the situation, target, and proposal dimensions.

Because the three dimensions are so closely coupled, it is helpful to think of them as a single, interacting unit rather than as three separate factors related in a straight-line sequence from S to T to P.

A shared understanding exists when each party to a joint inquiry understands the situation, target, and proposal dimensions from the others' points of view. Such a shared understanding is the objective of joint inquiry. In other words, the purposes of joint inquiry are to:

1. create a description of the current situation which can be understood and accepted by different group members

2. create a set of targets that are general enough to tryly state a goal toward which the activities are directed and specific enough so that group members will be able to agree that a target has or has not been reached.

3. create a plan of action that is specific enough that various people can agree about who is to do what when. Inquiry will probably move from general proposals to specific, detailed plans of action.

It is usually ineffective to try to work on one dimension at a time. Agreement does not need to be reached first on S, then on T, and finally, on P. Instead, the group discusses the problems freely and spontaneously, contributing information about S or T or P as it occus to them. Any proposal may reveal new targets or new information about the situation. Comments about S or T, likewise, may result in information in any dimension.

The form in which the information will be organized need not dictate the form of the inquiry. The interaction can be spontaneous although the information generated is recorded on separate sheets of paper or in separate columns of a chart. Entries can be made as they occur or as they are agreed to by the group.

Step 3

The data collected by the teacher appear on three pages. Spend 10 minutes or so reviewing these data before you begin to record on newsprint what you think about the situations, targets, and proposals. Work no more than 20 minutes on newsprint, taking 30 minutes in all for this step.

Findings about Class Norms

Norms are shared (although maybe unspoken) agreements about what people will be rewarded and punished for doing in a group. Students were asked to complete a questionnaire like the one below. The number of students making each response to each norm appears in the boxes.

Questionnaire #1 : How This Class Feels

School classes are quite different from one another in how pupils think and feel about schoolwork, about one another, and about teachers. How do you think your classmates feel about the following things? Put a check in one of the boxes under "How Many Feel This Way?" for each of the statements below. There are no right or wrong answers.

| | How Many Feel This Way? | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Almost All | Many | About Half | Some | Only a Few |
| It is good to take part in classroom work. | 2 | 15 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Asking the teacher for help is a good thing to do. | 7 | 9 | 1 | 4 | 0 |
| It is good to help other students with classwork. | 4 | 5 | 6 | 2 | 4 |

Step 3, continued

Data About Individual Pupil's Standards

Students were given the norms questionnaire with different possible responses to get at the standard students held. Finding out what standards students hold is one way of knowing how much support there is for a given norm or how likely students are to "reward" one another for conforming to the norm. The numbers in the cells indicate how many students marked each response for each statement.

Questionnaire #2: How do you feel about these things?

Put a check in the box that tells how you feel about each of the statements below. There are no right or wrong answers.

| | I agree almost always | I agree as often as I disagree | I disagree almost always |
|---|---|---|---|
| It is good to take part in classroom work. | 19 | 1 | 1 |
| Asking the teacher for help is a good thing to do. | 16 | 4 | 1 |
| It is good to help other students with classwork. | 8 | 8 | 5 |

Step 3, continued one more time

Findings on Desired Changes

Students were given the following questionnaire with instructions to show with a checkmark how they would change the parts of their day. The number of students marking each response to each item appears in the boxes.

Questionnaire #3: Changing the Parts of Your Day

| | A lot more time | Some more time | Some less time | A lot less time |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Life in this class | 7 | 8 | 3 | 3 |
| Doing things in school outside of class | 2 | 6 | 9 | 4 |
| Doing things with friends after school | 7 | 8 | 4 | 2 |
| Doing things alone | 4 | 5 | 9 | 3 |

Step 4

Debrief the exercise for 10 minutes by discussing answers to questions like these:

A) How did we feel during the simulation?

B) What actions on the part of each of us contributed to or frustrated our joint inquiry?

C) What was easiest or hardest about being the helper or the helpee?

Note: The questionnaires used to collect data for this simulation come from : Fox, Robert; Margaret Luszki, and Richard Schmuck. Diagnosing Classroom Learning Environments. Chicago: S.R.A., 1966.

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Center for Educational Policy and Management, RSD Division
University of Oregon; 1472 Kincaid, Eugene, Oregon 97401

## Self-Administered Activities: Planning Methods

From time to time every educational team must do some planning of what to do in the future. A teaching team might plan how to teach math or a parent group might plan ways to get more support for the school from the school board. This packet describes two planning methods that can be used by teams or organizations. For each method there is a description of what must happen before the method is used and the steps involved.

### A Method for Inventing Plans

This method is best suited for occasions when the general purposes and outcomes of a group's work are already clear. For example, members of a teaching team may have decided already that the general purpose for which they are planning is to develop a peer tutoring program that will result in students having certain skills and a curriculum guide that can be shared with other schools. Or, for another example, a staff, parent, and student group may have as its general purpose the improvement of interpersonal relationships in the school so that there will be less absenteeism.

Once the general purposes and outcomes are known, the group takes the following steps:

1. Each individual writes or orally describes what he or she -- alone or or with others in the group -- would like to do. Each proposal has three main parts:

    a) a description of who would do what and how those actions relate to the general purpose of the group

    b) a desription of what would result from each action and how those products relate to more general outcomes

    c) a description of resources needed to take those actions

    The proposals could be written on newsprint and hung on the wall for all to see or they could be written on 5x8 cards that could be passed around or duplicated.

2. Individuals make sure they understand what each other is proposing. Debate and evaluation of proposals is not allowed so that clarification questions can help each person understand how the proposals are alike and different, fit together, or overlap.

3. The group now gets serious about forming plans out of the various proposals. This is done by listing commonly-mentioned products or clusters of products with all of the actions and resources that apply to each. Ideas from different people are combined most easily if the group considers all ideas as its property rather than as the property of the individuals who first proposed them. Starting from products means getting clear about specific outcomes of the group and

may result in conflict. Conflicts over goals and purposes can be resolved through negotiating a middle group, arranging tradeoffs, or by agreeing to work in parallel but independent ways toward different goals.

4. The group next analyzes the statements of actions required to produce each product. Additional steps can be added as timelines and responsibilities are agreed upon. Critical judgment is applied as members discuss whether the actions are necessary and sufficient to accomplish the purpose. Conflicts over proposed actions can be resolved by assuming an experimental attitude and saying, "Let's try doing it your way for a month and see what happens. We can always try something else if that doesn't work for us."

5. Finally, the group takes a careful look at the resources needed to decide if the plan is feasible. Again, conflict can surface if members disagree about their situation and the resources available to them. Many conflicts over situational data result from pluralistic ignorance and can be resolved by collecting more data. The group can search for unused materials and equipment or can discuss how much time and interest each member has in the proposed activities. The plan may be scaled down or elaborated upon depending upon the results of the resources survey.

A Method for Specifying Tasks, Responsibilities, and Timelines

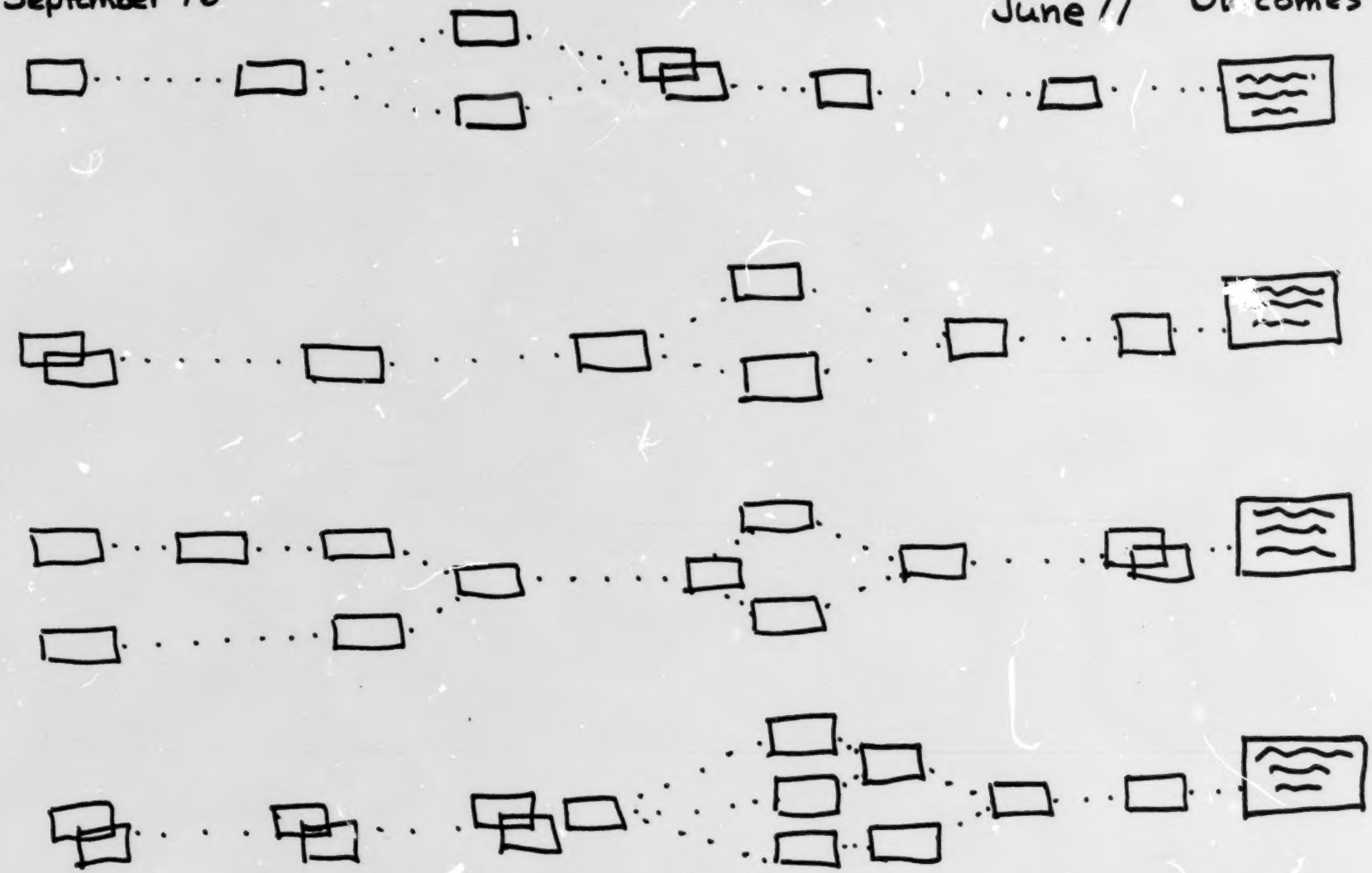
This method is best suited for occasions when the general actions, products, and resources needed are known. A group can use this method at any time once Step 3 in the Method for Inventing Plans above has been completed. In other words, this method is useful once everyone in the group can say, "These are the 5 or 10 or 20 things that we want to result from our work together."

Once the agreed-upon products or outcomes are known, the group takes the following steps:

1. Each person takes a pile of 5x8 cards and writes one specific task on each one. Tasks go on different cards if it is likely that different people can do them or if it is clear that one must be done before the next one can be started. As soon as each card is filled out it is pinned or taped to a large wall where others can see it and get ideas for other cards.

2. Everyone takes a look at all of the cards to make sure he or she understands what is on each one.

3. One person volunteers to be the card arranger. As others make suggestions about where specific cards should be placed on the wall, the card arranger does the shifting. In general cards get arranged so that first steps are on the left and final steps are on the right. Cards can overlap a bit if they describe the same task in different ways. Two tasks that can go on simultaneously are placed one above the other. The diagram on the following page shows how this might look.


September '76
June '77
Outcomes

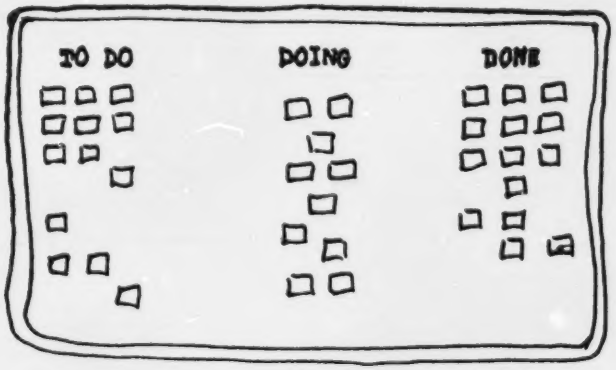
4. Once the task cards are arranged from left to right in sequence, dates are written on each one to show when it can be begun and when it must be finished. Additional cards are put up if someone thinks of something else that has to happen so something else can happen. The cards can be coded to show whether one person can do the task, it must happen in a meeting of the total group, or if some sub-team should assume responsibility. As individuals volunteer to do the different tasks, their names are recorded on the cards.

5. Some person or person volunteers to make a permanent record out of the cards. At least three kinds of permanent records are possible.

   a) The cards can be glued to large sheets of paper and put on a wall someplace where everyone can refer to them when they need to. Cards can be crossed out as soon as the tasks to which they refer are completed. This is the easiest form of permanent record to make, but may not be the most attractive.

   b) The display wall can be photographed and 8x10 black and white prints can be typed up and circulated to individuals. This kind of permanent record is more expensive to produce, but is best when group members can't easily get to the original cards when they need to.

   c) The information on the original cards can be typed onto smaller cards arranged on a three part bulletin board like the following:

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## Self-Administered Activities: Charting Responsibilities for Decision-Making

Once a group or organization has determined that one or more decisions must be made, the focus of discussion can turn to how each decision will be made and who will take part. Discussions of who will do what by when on a number of decisions can get pretty complicated unless some method is used to keep track of the agreements. This procedure offers such a method.

First, the group makes a list of decisions that will be made. Some of the decisions on the list may be generic or large ones as when a group lists "hiring new personnel," "scheduling of classes," or "setting our goals." Preferably the decisions are small and specific ones as when a group lists "who will teach the new math class," or "whether to put new paving in the parking lot."

Second, the group thinks of time lines and behaviors that will be used to make the decision. For example, a group might list : (1) initiate or create a recommendation by 9/15, (2) consult with some others by 9/22, (3) take final authority and make decision by 9/25, and (4) inform others by 9/30. For another decision, a group might list: (1) initiate a proposal by 3/14, (2) consult with others by 3/22, (3)make the decision by 3/30, and (4) exercise veto power by 4/1 if desired.

Third, the group decides who will do what. A list of all possible "who's" is built before specific responsibilities are agreed to. The possible "who's" might include names of individuals, of permanently-constituted or ad-hoc subgroups, or classes of people such as teachers, students, and parents.

An example of a completed responsibility chart appears on the next page.

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The originator of the idea for a decision-making grid was John Wallen. Charting the Decision Making Structure of an Organization. Portland, Oregon: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 1970.

DECISION RESPONSIBILITY CHART

| DECISIONS \ WHO | Principal | Team Leaders | Total Faculty | Team A | Team B | Team C | Student Council | PTA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Hiring new teacher | A 3/14<br>D 4/2 | C<br>4/1 | B<br>3/21 | | | | E<br>4/10 | E<br>4/10 |
| Schedule for library | E 4/10 | A 4/1<br>C+D 4/7 | E<br>4/10 | B 4/5<br>E 4/10 | B 4/5<br>E 4/10 | B 4/5<br>E 4/10 | E 4/10 | E 4/10 |
| Staff-meeting procedures | | | A,B,C,D,E<br>3/10 | | | | | |
| Team C reading curriculum | B 3/21<br>D 4/1 | B 3/21 | E 4/2 | | | A 3/14<br>C 4/1 | | |

A= must take initiative to initiate or create the recommendation or spell out alternatives

B= must be consulted early enough to offer information, demonstration or proof

C= must make the decision

D= has final authority or veto power

E= must be informed of the decision to take action

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